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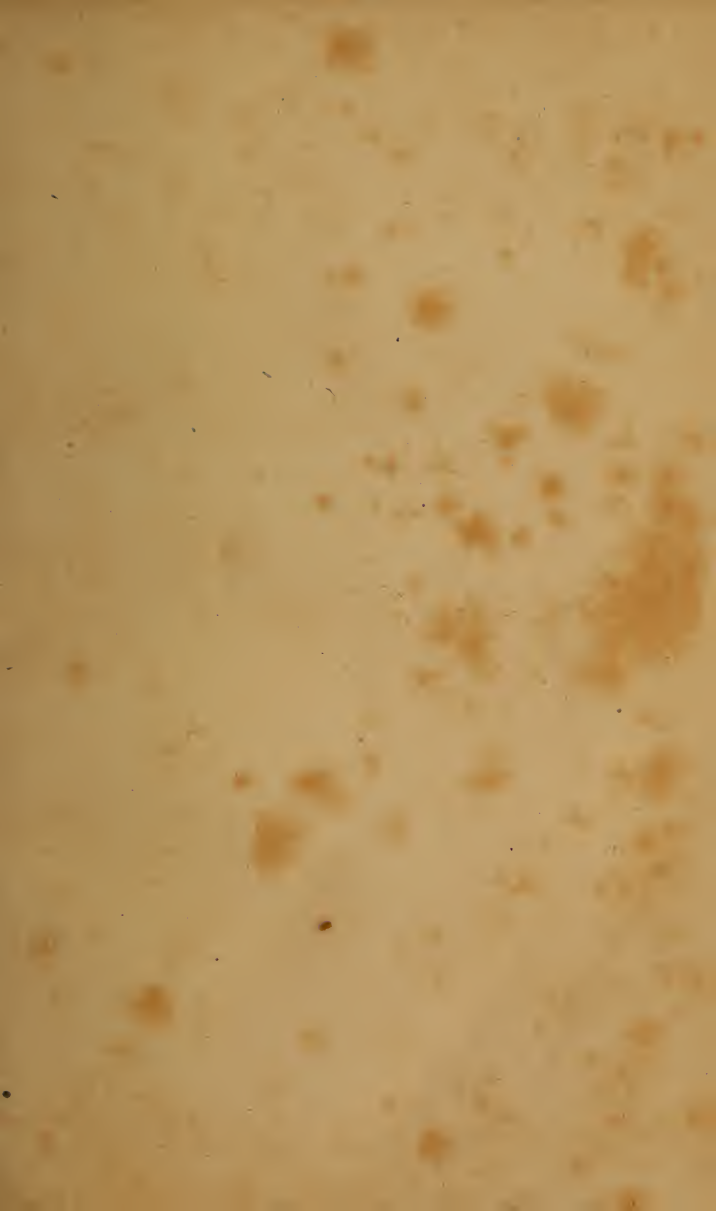


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GENERAL VIEW OF PETRA FROM THE NORTHEAST.—PAGE 89.

THE
EVIDENCE OF PROPHECY;

SELECTED AND ABRIDGED,

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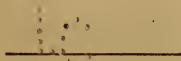
ADDITIONAL REFLECTIONS

FROM A WORK

BY THE REV. A. KEITH,

ENTITLED

Evidence of the Truth of the Christian Religion, derived from the literal fulfilment of Prophecy, particularly as illustrated by the History of the Jews, and by the Discoveries of recent Travellers "



PUBLISHED BY THE
AMERICAN TRACT SOCIETY

150 NASSAU-STREET, NEW YORK.

[1833]

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By Exchange
Army and Navy Club
May 27, 1922

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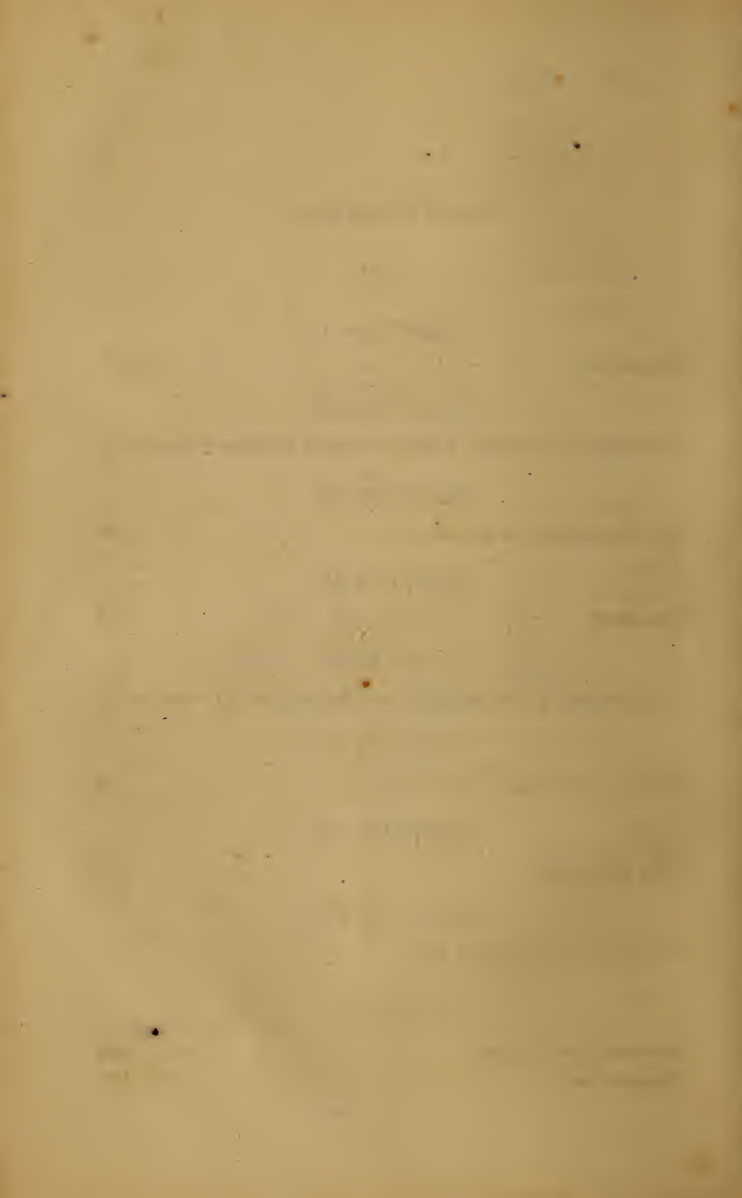
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THE

EVIDENCE OF PROPHECY.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTION.

THE object of the following pages is to present the reader with a short and plain view of some of the numerous instances in which the manifest fulfillment of prophecy proves that the Scriptures are given by inspiration of God. And whoever you are, into whose hands this little book may come, should not the very announcement of such a subject excite your attention, and induce you to give it a careful perusal?

Are you a Christian? Then you know that it is good to give heed to the "sure word of prophecy;" and you will not hastily turn aside from hearing a reason of the hope that is in you, nor refrain from seeking how you may not only render an answer to every one that asketh of you such a reason, but how you may be also able to withstand gainsayers, and to strengthen your brethren.

Are you weak in the faith? then the same "sure word" is well fitted also for you; and you would "do well to take heed unto it as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in your heart." It leads to no doubtful disputations.

And if heretofore the scoffs of the scorner have troubled you—if the deceitfulness of sin has been in danger of hardening you in unbelief—or if the insidious arguments of a vain philosophy have ever shaken your faith, it should be no unwelcome or unprofitable task to you to use diligently those means which God has provided, in order that you may be well assured of the truth of his word, and to which you have only to look, that you may learn that “the spirit of prophecy” is indeed “the testimony of Jesus,” and that it is verily confirmed as such, to a jot and tittle, our enemies themselves being judges. And if, hearing, you would hear, or, seeing, you would see, you could be no longer doubtful that “prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but” that “holy men of” old “spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;” so that instead of having but a name to live, and yet being dead, seeking, you might find; and be enabled by the self-same Spirit to call Jesus, Lord—to own him for your Savior and your Master, and, being rooted, and grounded, and established in the faith, truly to confess him before men, of whom all the prophets bear witness.

Or, reader, if you are an adversary, yet this volume may prove a friend to you. It is not in unkindness that you are invited to the proof that salvation may be found. And wherefore should you refuse a patient hearing? Would it be in candor, or for truth, or reason, or your safety? “Come and let us reason together,” is the language of the Christian, and of the God he worships, as thou also claimest that it is thine.

If you be fortified in a “strong delusion,” the less should be your fear, and the greater is your need of looking to the “sure word of prophecy.” Yet in your own hopeless way you cannot possibly reach further

than doubt, and is it wise to reject, without even a hearing, the proffer of certainty and of salvation in its stead? And whether you will hear, or whether you will forbear, "thou art the man" to whom the full testimony of Jesus is borne, in the manifest fulfillment of many prophecies, that all the benefit of such a combination of miracles may, if you harden not your heart, be yours; that what partially tends to confirm the belief of others, may lead to your conviction; and that thus, through "the acknowledging of the truth," and the blessing of the Holy Spirit, you may be brought from darkness to light, and from death to life.

Or, reader, if your case be more desperate still, for "worse than an infidel" there may be; if lukewarmness mark your character, so that you scarcely care so much for the faith as it is in Jesus, as to trouble yourself at all to act on it as a truth, or to question whether it be true or false; if the alienation of your heart from the living God be so great that no bias of judgment is needful to sustain a practical infidelity like yours; if, wedded to the world and bigoted to sense, you mind only earthly things, and place all your love, and happiness, and confidence in them, and care for none of those things which pertain to life, to godliness, to your peace, and to immortality; if the tidings of salvation have no charm for you; and if the terrors of the Lord be as little understood or regarded as words spoken in an unknown tongue; yet there is a language that you still may hear, there are truths which pertain not to this life alone that you still may discern; and you may even learn that for you also, in this the time of merciful visitation, God has provided a way of escape. For since to earthly things only you will look, it is to them that the word of prophecy directs you. You may ask

of those things that are at the present day to be seen, of which it told, and they will all answer in one voice that they have been, and now are, what in the ages of old it was declared by inspiration of God that they should be. And thus you may learn that the Bible is the word of God—that the world which you worship is his, from whose worship and service its vanities entice—that his power is over all—that the successive changes and convulsions among nations are credentials of the unerring certainty of the word of HIM who changeth not—and that all his promises are true, and all his judgments sure.

Or, is the passing of an idle hour the purpose of your reading? And is it not worthy of a trial at least, to ascertain whether wonderful things may not be beheld out of the law and of the prophets, as capable as the delusions of any idle tale of producing not only a momentary excitement but deep feeling? If your search be after novelties, it may possibly be new to you to read, in the writings of unbelievers, commentaries on the Scriptures and confirmations of their truth; and it may not lessen your surprise to find that, in the construction of this part of the Christian evidence, (as also in others,) they have been more efficient, though not less regular and laborious co-operators, than are “the hewers of wood and the drawers of water.” Or if you seek for wonders, and have not acquainted yourself with God, nor considered the operation of his hands, you have only to hear what he has purposed, and how he has fulfilled it, and to behold the wondrous things he has done, that, if these be thought upon aright, your ears may tingle; and that, instead of such excited feelings passing away in mere unprofitable amazement, your lips may be ready to confess that it would be the

greatest of wonders that such demonstrations of the Spirit and of power could ever be resisted, and that if you yourself did not believe Moses and the prophets, neither would you "be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

Or, reader, if happily a different spirit be within you, if your mind revolt at the thought of opposition to a doctrine according to godliness, and if you seek for truth in the love of truth, it will give you comfort to know that, high as the consolations of religion are, clear as are its precepts, gracious as are its tidings, and glorious as are the hopes which it sets before the Christian, even so abundant is the proof, and so sure the word of prophecy. And if such be the temper of your mind, you will not be slow to regard the strong confirmation which the fulfillment of each successive prediction gives, that, in the revelation of the will of God to man through Jesus Christ, who died for our sins and rose again for our justification, truth is united to mercy, righteousness, and peace, and that they all meet together. Nor will you ever be at a loss to bear home this application of such a subject: that, knowing the word to be divine, you have ever to "give earnest heed" to all that is written therein to you and to your children—so that, walking in the light which has come down from heaven, you may now believe, and hereafter feel, that the immortal glory which it reveals as the final portion of every faithful servant of Jesus, shall as assuredly be realized as the fact may now be manifest, that many prophecies of old have already proved true.

Whenever a man, even for the first time, beholds a regular and magnificent edifice, he has at once undoubted evidence of the skill of the architect, and of the

power that was put forth in its construction. Of this he is convinced without any argument. He is not blind, and he has visible proof before him. He neither sees, nor ever saw, a plan of the building, nor a single man at work; but he knows that all was planned and built; otherwise so goodly a structure, evidently the work of human hands, would never have been erected. In like manner God has not left himself without a witness to the sons of men, either in his works or in his word. Things that are not seen, are understood by the things that do appear. The humblest hut exists-not without a builder. And the heavens, and the earth, and all that is therein, bear witness to the great Architect of the universe, and show forth his eternal power and Godhead. But, however clearly these may be manifested, so that all are without excuse who glorify him not as God; yet there was many a mystery concerning the nature and dispensations of the Most High, and the state and destiny of man, which the light of reason, struggling through the gloom of ages, tried in vain to penetrate. The world by wisdom knew not God, as it had need to know him. No mortal could unfold the mystery of godliness, nor ever devise, far less impart, the means of deliverance from spiritual darkness, from the conscious guiltiness of sin, or from the fear of death, through which man, by nature, is all his life-time subject unto bondage. Many wise men did desire to see what we see, and to hear what we hear. In Athens, a city then the most renowned on earth for wisdom, an altar was erected "To the unknown God," but every Christian has only to take the Bible in his hands to show whom he worships. The question of the immortality of the soul—a truth impressed upon the mind, except when obliterated for a

time by a devotedness to sense—called forth all the powers of reason to solve it, and yet the wisest of men could only elicit from the ruins of human nature some glimmerings of a better state. But now life and immortality are brought to light by the Gospel. And instead of doubting or disputing, as heathens were wont to do, what part, if any, the Almighty took in the control or administration of human affairs, we now not only know that “the Most High ruleth over all the kingdoms of the earth,” and that “a sparrow falleth not on the ground without the Father,” but in looking back on the history of nations in the ages that are passed, we behold in them the very proofs that the record which revealed their destiny is the word of the living God. Tidings pertaining to eternity and salvation, such as it never entered into the heart of man to conceive, before Christ appeared among the children of men, are now clearly revealed, and may be heard and read by all. And as the works of the creation testify the power and Godhead of the Creator, so his word itself testifies of its divine Author; and there is also many a witness that the Scriptures are in truth given by inspiration of God. Their divine origin is proved not merely by the doctrines they reveal and the precepts they enjoin, concerning which it may be asked of men why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right? but by external evidence infinitely surpassing all that the ingenuity of man could ever have devised, and all that the power of man could ever have exhibited or produced, either to confirm any revelation, or to palm any imposture on the world.

In regard to the evidence which the truth of prophecy imparts, so strong is the proof and so clear may be the perception of it, that ‘he who runneth may

read.' The multiplicity and precision of the prophecies contained in Scripture is such, that no band of the most subtle deceivers could ever have pretended, or ever did pretend, to any such clear and close inspection of futurity; or if, to uphold any system, they had made the trial, they would only have been forging the readiest means of detecting their own imposition, and would have left it to every succeeding event which they had attempted to foretell, to mar their purpose, and to mark them out as lying prophets. The *declaration of the end from the beginning* is as sure an evidence that the word is of God, who knoweth all things as the creation of the world at the beginning testifies that the work is of God, who can do all things. *What was foretold that men could never have revealed? what predicted events have been fulfilled which men could never have foretold? and what certainty is there that the prophecies so long preceded the event?*—are questions which all have a right to ask, and which every one may be enabled to answer. These are the plain, broad, and liberal principles upon which every reader is invited to look to “the testimony of Jesus,” and every gainsayer challenged to examine and canvass it to the uttermost. It asks no easy credit, it fears no trying scrutiny. If, indeed, there be strong truth therein, well may it lead to rational conviction all who will be convinced; and justly may it leave under righteous condemnation at last all who wilfully reject the counsel of God against themselves, whilst they will not hear and believe what none but the Lord could have spoken. And, reader, will you pray unto the Father of lights, that wherever there is light you may see it—wherever there is truth, that you may know it—that you may be saved from all the delusion of vain ima

ginations, from all darkness of the understanding from all perverseness of the will, from all the deceitfulness of the heart—that you be not hardened in unbelief against the word of the living God—that you may know whether the doctrine be of God, and, if it certainly be such, that what is lacking in the degree, or nature, or work of your faith, may be perfected through all the means which infinite wisdom and love have provided for that end, and that you may learn truly to believe, even to the saving of the soul?

The antiquity of Scripture is indisputable. In whatever manner the most ungodly man on earth might scoff at the Bible, and vent all his malice against it, he cannot, except he be the most ignorant too, doubt that it has existed for ages. It is assuredly no idle tale of yesterday, like some of the wild dogmas of an atheistic creed. There are proofs of its antiquity to which no other book can lay claim. It has never been without its witnesses and its guardians, though these very witnesses and guardians have sometimes been the greatest perverters of the Christian doctrine, or even the bitterest enemies of the Christian faith. The Old Testament, in which the prophecies abound, has been preserved with the utmost care by the Jews in every age. It forms the code of their laws, both sacred and civil, and the record of their history during many centuries, as well as of the prophecies, which looked and still look prospectively into futurity. Tacitus, a celebrated Roman historian, who lived in the first century, in referring to prophecies contained in it, speaks of the books of the Jewish priests as at that time ancient. Two thousand and one hundred years have elapsed since they were translated into Greek. They were

read in the synagogues every Sabbath-day, commentaries on them were written, and ever since the beginning of the Christian era, copies of the Old Testament, as well as of the New, have been spread into every region, and have been multiplied without number in various languages.

But to evade all attempt at caviling, and to set aside all possibility of doubt in the reader's mind as to the absolute certainty that the predictions preceded the events, many existing facts—that are as capable of proof as any fact whatever, of which men can see the evidence with their eyes—shall, in the course of the following summary inquiry, be adduced to prove the precise and positive truth, at the present hour, of the most ancient prophecies, of which also there are many that yet remain to be fulfilled.

The wonderful nature of the events which were foretold, which are the most singular and surprising that have ever occurred in the history of the world, renders unnecessary even a single remark to show that they are such as mortal man could never have foreseen. Each speaks for itself. And all of them declare, with one united voice, that the word which revealed them is indeed divine.

The prophecies contained in the Scriptures are so numerous, and the proofs of their fulfillment so abundant, that, instead of any deficiency of evidence, the only difficulty lies in selecting or condensing them. A general view of the prophecies that have a definite and distinct meaning, and that have received an express and literal accomplishment, may perhaps best convey, in a short compass, some representation, however inadequate to the subject, of the fullness and force of this sure evidence of inspiration. The subject cannot

be exhausted after the fullest investigation, for it forms a growing evidence, and is continually gaining fresh strength as the progress of events throws fresh light on the accomplishment of the predictions. And the slightest and most superficial view that can be taken of the subject—if the corresponding prophecies and facts be but touched upon, and presented to any inquiring or candid mind, and be made a matter of reflection at all—cannot fail to show that there must be more in the word and in the work than man's knowledge and device. And if the reader shall close the perusal of this work lightened of a doubt or strengthened in the faith, would to God that he would suffer us to crave of him, in return, to leave the first principles of the knowledge of Christ, and to go on unto perfection; to search the Scriptures as for hidden treasures; to hearken diligently to the oracles of the living God, knowing that he is “not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent;” and to give all the glory unto God, that the gain may be his own

CHAPTER II.

Prophecies concerning Christ and the Christian Religion.

The coming of a Savior, which was the hope of Israel and the expectation of the Jews in every age, is frequently foretold throughout the Old Testament Scriptures. They represent it as announced by the voice of God to the first human pair, and as forming, from the first to the last, the theme of all the prophets. And, however imperfect a summary view of such nu-

merous prophecies must necessarily be, a few remarks respecting them shall be prefixed to the more direct and immediate proofs of the inspiration of Scripture, derived from existing facts, in order that the reader may be rather induced to search the Scriptures to see how clearly they testify of Jesus, than contented to rest satisfied with the mere opening of the subject.

A few of the leading features of the prophecies concerning Christ, and their fulfillment, shall be traced as they mark the time of his appearance, the place of his birth, and the family out of which he was to arise, his life and character, his sufferings and his death, the nature of his doctrine, and the extent of his kingdom.

The time of the Messiah's appearance in the world, as predicted in the Old Testament, is defined by a number of concurring circumstances that fix it to the very date of the advent of Christ. The sceptre was not to depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver to cease from among his descendants, till Shiloh should come. Gen. 49:10. The Desire of all nations, the Messenger of the covenant, the Lord whom they sought, was to come to the second temple, and to impart to it, from his presence, a greater glory than that of the former. Hag. 2:7, 9. Mal. 3:1. A messenger was to appear before him, the voice of one crying in the wilderness, to prepare his way. Isa. 40:3. Mal. 3:1; 4:5. A specified period,—marked, according to similar computations in the Jewish scriptures, by weeks of years, each day for a year,—was set, from the going forth of the command to restore and to build Jerusalem, after the Babylonish captivity, unto Messiah the prince. Dan. 9:25. A period somewhat longer was determined upon the people and upon the holy city. Dan. 9:24. After the Messiah was to be cut off, the people of the prince that

should come were to destroy the city and the sanctuary; desolations, even to the consummation, were determined, and the sacrifice and oblation were to cease. Dan. 9:26, 27. A king did reign over the Jews in their own land, though the ten tribes had long ceased to be a kingdom; their national council, the members of which, as Jews, were lineally descended from Judah, exercised its authority and power—the temple was standing—the oblation and sacrifice, according to the law of Moses, were there duly and daily offered up—and the time prescribed for the coming of the Messiah had drawn to its close—at the commencement of the Christian era. Before the public ministry of Jesus, a messenger appeared to prepare his way; and Josephus, in the history of that time, speaks of the blameless life and cruel death of “John that was called the baptist,” and describes his preaching and baptism. Josephus’s Antiquities, b. 18, c. 5, § 2. But every mark that denoted the fullness of the time, and of its signs, when the Messiah was to appear, was erased soon after the death of Christ, and being fixed to that single period, those marks could no more be restored again than time past could return. The time determined on the people and on the holy city, seventy weeks or four hundred and ninety years, passed away. The tribe of Judah were no longer united under a king. Banished from their own land, and subjected to every oppression, there was no more a lawgiver of the tribe of Judah, though Judah was he whom his brethren were to serve. Of the temple one stone was not left upon another. The sacrifice and oblation, which none but priests could offer, altogether ceased when the genealogies of the tribe of Levi were lost, and when the Jews had no temple, nor country, nor priest, nor altar. Ere Jerusalem

was destroyed, or desolation had passed over the land of Judea, the expectation was universal among the Jews that their Messiah was then to appear; and heathen as well as Jewish historians testify of the belief then prevalent over the whole East that the ancient prophecies bore a direct and express reference to that period. And the question might now go to the heart of a Jew, however loth to abandon the long-cherished hope of his race, how can these prophecies be true, if the Messiah be not come? or where, from the first words of Moses to the last of Malachi, can there be found such marks of the time when Shiloh was to come, or Messiah the prince to be cut off, as pertained to the period when their forefathers crucified Jesus—a period which closed over the glory of Judah, and which, in the continued unbelief of the Jews, has not heretofore left, for nearly eighteen centuries, a bright page in their history beyond it?

Though the countrymen of Christ when he came would not receive him, yet it was of the Jews that Jesus was to come; and the human lineage of the Messiah is as clearly marked in the prophecies as the time of his appearance. The divinity of the person of the Messiah, and his taking upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, is declared in the Old Testament as well as in the New. He whose name was to be called the Wonderful, the Counsellor, the Mighty God, was to become a child that was to be born, a son that was to be given. Isa. 9:6. It was the seed of the woman that was to bruise the serpent's head. Gen. 3:15. The line of his descent, according to the flesh, and the place of his birth, were expressly foretold. It was in the seed of Abraham that all the nations of the earth were to be blessed. Gen. 22:18. It was from the

midst of the Israelites, of their brethren, that a prophet like unto Moses was to arise. Deut. 18:15. And he was to be not only of the tribe of Judah, Gen. 49:8, &c., but also of the house or family of David. From the root of Jesse a Branch was to grow up, on which the Spirit of the Lord was to rest, and to which the Gentiles would seek. Isa. 11:1-10. It was unto David that a righteous Branch was to arise, a King, whose name was to be called *The Lord our Righteousness*. Jer. 23:5, 6. And it was in Bethlehem Ephrath, in the land of Judah, little as it was among the thousands of Israel, that He was to come, whose goings forth had been of old, from everlasting. Micah, 5:2. And Jesus is he alone of the seed of the woman, of the descendants of Abraham, of the tribe of Judah, of the house of David, in whom all the families of the earth can be blessed; to whom the Gentiles seek, and who, ere the family genealogies of the Jews were lost, was shown by them to be born of the lineage of David, and in the town of Bethlehem.

The history of the life of Christ by the four Evangelists is simply a record of what he said and did, and his character is illustrated by his words and actions alone. Christians have often tried to delineate it; and if in the attempt their thoughts have harmonized with the divine records, their hearts may well have then felt as it were the impression of that divine image after which man was at first created. Even some who never sought to be the champions of the Christian faith, have been struck with irresistible admiration of the life of its Author. Rousseau acknowledges that it would have been nothing less than a miracle that such a character, if not real, could ever have been thought of by fishermen of Galilee. And Lord Byron not only called

Christ diviner than Socrates, but he has no less truly than nobly said, that "if ever God was man, or man God, he was both." But the divine character is such that none but a divine hand could draw; and seeking in the prophecies what the Messiah was to be, we read what Jesus was while he dwelt among men.

"Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips, therefore God hath blessed thee for ever. The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre—thou lovest righteousness and hatest iniquity. Psalm 45:2, 6, 7. The Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord. He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears. But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth. And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. Isa. 11:2-5. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd, he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom. Isa. 40:11. He shall not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets. A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench. Isa. 42:2, 3. Thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation, lowly, and riding upon an ass. Zech. 9:9. He hath done no violence, neither was there any deceit in his lips. Isa. 53:9. He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he was brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. Isaiah, 53:7. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheek to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting. Isa. 50:6. He shall not fail nor be discouraged, till he have set judgment in the

earth. Isa. 42 : 4. I have set my face as a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed. Isa. 50 : 7. He shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper. He shall redeem their soul from deceit and violence, and precious shall their blood be in his sight. Men shall be blessed in him—all nations shall call him blessed." Psalm 72 : 12, 14, 17.

The death of Christ was as unparalleled as his life, and the prophecies are as minutely descriptive of his sufferings as of his virtues. His growing up as a tender plant; Isa. 53 : 2; his riding in humble triumph into Jerusalem; his being betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, Zech. 11 : 12, and scourged, and buffeted, and spit upon; the piercing of his hands and of his feet, and yet every bone of him remaining unbroken; the last offered draught of vinegar and gall; the parting of his raiment, and casting lots upon his vesture; Psalm 22, 69; the manner of his death and of his burial, Isa. 53 : 9, and his rising again without seeing corruption, Psalm 16 : 10, were all as minutely predicted as literally fulfilled. The last three verses of the fifty-second and the whole of the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah,—written above seven hundred years before the Christian era, and forming, word for word, a part of the Jewish as well as of the Christian Scriptures,—prophetically describe, like a very history of the facts, the sufferings and the death of Christ; his rejection by the Jews; his humility, his meekness, his affliction, and his agony; how his words were disbelieved; how his state was lowly; how his sorrow was severe; how his visage and his form were marred more than the sons of men; and how he opened not his mouth but to make intercession for the transgressors. In direct opposition to every dispensation of Providence which is

registered in the records of the Jews, this prophecy represents spotless innocence suffering by the appointment of Heaven—death as the issue of perfect obedience—God's righteous servant as forsaken by him—and one who was perfectly immaculate bearing the chastisement of many guilty, sprinkling many nations from their iniquity by virtue of his sacrifice, justifying many by his knowledge, and dividing a portion with the great, and the spoil with the strong, because he had poured out his soul unto death.

The prophecies concerning the humiliation, the sufferings, and the cutting off of the Messiah, need only to be read from the Jewish Scriptures, to show that the very unbelief of the Jews is an evidence against them and the very scandal of the cross a strong testimony to Jesus. For thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, according to the Scriptures. And those things which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled.

That the Jews still retain these prophecies, and are the means of preserving them and communicating them throughout the world, while they bear so strongly against themselves, and testify so clearly of a Savior that was first to suffer and then to be exalted, are facts which give a confirmation to the truth of Christianity, than which it is difficult to conceive any stronger. The prophecies that testify of the sufferings of the Messiah need no forced interpretation, but apply, in a plain and literal manner, to the history of the sufferings and of the death of Christ. In the testimony of the Jews to the existence of these prophecies, long prior to the Christian era; in their remaining unaltered to this hour; in the accounts given by the evangelists

of the life and death of Christ; in the testimony of heathen authors, and in the arguments of the first opposers of Christianity, from the mean condition of its Author and the manner of his death,—we have now more ample evidence of the fulfillment of all these prophecies than could have been conceived possible at so great a distance of time.

But if there be any truth, the perception and acknowledgment of which should lead to a sense of its importance, or a feeling of its power, it is surely that of the cutting off of the Messiah, as making reconciliation for iniquity, or the death of Christ as a sacrifice for the sins of men. It is not merely the knowledge of his righteous life, and of his ignominious death, in confirmation of the word of prophecy, but an interest also in them that every sinner needs. There exists not the man, except he be alike ignorant of the spirit within him and of the Father of spirits, who could think of standing for himself, to answer for his sins, in the immediate presence of an all-holy God, and to abide the scrutiny of omniscience, and the awards of strict unmitigated justice enforced by almighty power. Nor could man of himself, in whom sin has once dwelt, be ever meet, whatever his thoughts of immortality might be, for participating in the holiness or partaking of the happiness of heaven. And who is there that, even in the search after divine truth, can pass by Calvary, or cast but a glance toward it, and there behold in the sufferings of Christ a clear prophetic mark of his Messiahship, without pondering deeply on the guiltiness of sin, which nothing less than the voluntary death of the Son of God could expiate, and on that infinite goodness and love which found and gave the ransom, whereby, though guilt could not be unpunished, the

guilty might be saved. And if he reflect upon the manner in which this vision and prophecy were sealed up, who that has a heart within him, or that can be drawn with those cords of love which are the bands of a man, can refrain from feeling the personal application to himself of the words of Jesus—"I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me?"

But the prophecies further present us with the character of the Gospel as well as of its Author, and with a description of the extent of his kingdom as well as of his sufferings. That he was to make a full and clear revelation of the will of God, and establish a new and perfect religion, was frequently and explicitly foretold. Deut. 18 : 18, 19. Isa. 9 : 6, 7. 42 : 6. 11 : 1-5. 55 : 3, 4. Jer. 31 : 31-34. Ezek. 34 : 23, 24. The words of God were to be put into his mouth, and whoever would not hearken unto him, God would require it of them. He was to be given for a covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles, to open the blind eyes. His law was to be put in the inward parts, or to be written not in tables of stone, but in the heart. And the religion of Jesus is pure, spiritual, perfect, and adapted alike to all. It is a revelation of the whole counsel of God ; it is a law which has to be written on the heart ; a kingdom which is established within. The doctrine of the Gospel is altogether a doctrine according to godliness. This its enemies will not deny, for it is the cause why they hate it. Its very excellence and perfection is a stumbling-block to them. There is not a sin which it does not reprobate, nor a virtue which it does not inculcate. And too pure and perfect it would indeed be for man, were not reconciliation made for iniquity, and redemption to be found from its bondage.

But the complete revelation of the will of God,

which of itself would have pointed out a highway of holiness that men could never have reached, was to be accompanied with a revelation also of the grace and mercy of God, which might well suffice to show that the light was indeed light from Heaven. And while Jesus gave new commandments unto men, he announced tidings of great joy, which it never entered into the heart of man to conceive. In fulfillment of the prophetic character and office of the Messiah, he published salvation. Never was any anointed like Christ to preach good tidings to the meek; to bind up the broken-hearted; to proclaim liberty to the captive, the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to comfort them that mourn in Zion; to give to those who mourn for sin, or who seek for true consolation amid the bereavements or any of the evils of life, beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. And none like him ever proclaimed either the acceptable year of the Lord, or the day of judgment of our God. Isa. 61 : 1-3. What many wise men of old sought to know, Jesus taught. What they desired to see, he hath revealed. All that he taught, as well as all that he did and suffered, bore witness of him as the promised Messiah; and that kingdom has now come nigh which the prophets saw afar off.

That the Gospel emanated from Judea—that it was rejected by a great proportion of the Jews—that it was opposed at first by human power—that kings have acknowledged and supported it—that it has already continued for many ages—and that it has been propagated throughout many countries—are facts that were clearly foretold, and have been literally fulfilled. “Out of Zion shall go forth the law; and the word of the

Lord from Jerusalem. Isa. 2:3, 4. Micah, 4:2. He shall be for a sanctuary, but for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to both the houses of Israel; for a gin and for a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed? Isa. 8:14; 53:1. The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his annointed. Psalm 2:2. Matt. 10:17; 16:18; 24:9-14. To a servant of rulers, kings shall see and arise. princes also shall worship. The Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Isa. 49:7-23. The Gentiles shall see thy righteousness; a people that know me not shall be called after my name. Behold thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and nations that know not thee shall run unto thee." Isa. 11:10; 55:5. No one is now ignorant of the facts, that a system of religion which inculcates piety, and purity, and love,—which releases man from every burdensome rite and from every barbarous institution, and proffers the greatest of blessings,—arose from the land of Judea, was rejected by the Jews, persecuted by Jews and Gentiles, and yet has subsisted for many ages, and has been spread into many countries, and is outwardly owned by kings and by people as the faith of the civilized world.

The final extension of the Gospel over all the earth is the theme of many prophecies, Isaiah, 25:7. 2:3. 35:1. 40:5. 42:4. 52:10. 54:1-5. 60:5. 65:1. Psalm 72:8, 17. 2:8. 22:27, 28. Hosea, 1:10. Micah, 4:1, while it is also clearly implied in others, that a long period was to elapse before the reign of darkness was to cease, or the veil to be taken off all nations. After the Messiah was to be cut off, and the

city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary to be destroyed-desolations, even to the consummation, and until judgment should come upon the desolator, were determined; the children of Israel were to abide many days without a king, or ephod, or sacrifice; desolations of many generations were to pass over the land of Judea, Jerusalem was to be trodden down of the Gentiles, and blindness in part was to happen to Israel, till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled; and a great apostacy was to arise, and to prevail for a long, but limited period, before the stone that was to be cut out without hands was to become a great kingdom and fill the whole earth, or the last days should arrive, wherein the mountain of the Lord's house would be finally established and exalted above all, and all nations flow into it. Dan. 9 : 27. Hosea, 3 : 4. Isa. 61 : 4. Luke, 21 : 24. Rom. 11 : 25. 2 Thess. 2 : 1-12. Dan. 2 : 45. Isa. 2 : 2. Micah, 4 : 1. But already, far beyond the conception of man to have harbored the thought, hath the light which has come out of Judea enlightened the nations; already have the Scriptures been made known in a tenfold degree more than any other book; long has He been a light to the Gentiles, and long have kings seen and arisen, and princes rendered worship to Him whom man despised, and whom the Jewish nation abhorred. The Christian faith made at first its bloodless way throughout the world. And though many a conspiracy has been formed, and many a bloody warfare waged against it, it not only stands unsubdued and unshaken after every assault, but the vain rage of its adversaries has been subservient to its extension and its triumphs. As a matter of history, the progress of Christianity is at least astonishing; as the fulfillment of many prophecies, it is evidently miraculous.

In closing even this brief and very imperfect summary of the prophecies relative to the Christian faith and to its Author, are we not authorized to consider ancient prophecy, as bearing testimony to Jesus as the Savior; the time and the place of the birth of Christ; the tribe and family from which he was descended; his life, his character, his sufferings, and his death; the nature of his doctrine, and the fate of his religion;—that it was to proceed from Jerusalem; that the Jews would reject it; that it would be opposed and persecuted at first; that kings would nevertheless acknowledge its divine authority; and that it would spread throughout many a nation, even to the uttermost parts of the earth.

Why, then, were so many prophecies delivered? Why, from the calling of Abraham to the present time, have the Jews been separated, as a peculiar people, from all the nations of the earth? Why, from the age of Moses to that of Malachi, during the space of a thousand years, did a succession of prophets arise, all testifying of a Savior that was to come? Why was the Book of Prophecy sealed for nearly four hundred years before the coming of Christ? Why is there still, to this day, undisputed, if not miraculous, evidence of the antiquity of all these prophecies, by their being sacredly preserved, in every age, in the custody and guardianship of the enemies of Christianity? Why was such a multitude of facts foretold that are applicable to Christ and to him alone? Why?—but that all this mighty preparation might usher in the Gospel of righteousness, and prepare the way for the kingdom of God; and that Christians also, in every age, might add to their “peace and joy in believing” the perfect trust, that however great the promises of God may be, they

still are sure; and that he who spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us all, will with him also, if his we be, freely give us all things. And if we ever read a book for any object, ought we not diligently to search the Scriptures, to see how clearly they testify of Christ? And ought not every word of such testimony to be, like all Scripture besides, profitable for doctrine and for instruction in righteousness? And may it not be profitable 'for reproof and for correction' to all who mind only earthly things—who are eager to seek after unprofitable knowledge—who could talk, with all volubility, of the temporal concerns of others or their own—who could expatiate freely, perhaps, on the properties of a beast, the quality of their food, or the beauty of a garment—and who, although they have had the Bible constantly beside them, have, for many a year, remained ignorant of the value of the treasure it contains, or of the fullness of the testimony which God has given of his Son? None surely would any longer wilfully refrain from searching the Scriptures to see how they testify of Jesus, or from seeking the words of eternal life which may be found in them, were they to lay to heart the thought that the second coming of Christ to judge the quick and the dead, is as certain as that the prophetic tidings of his first advent—once heard afar off—have already proved true.

CHAPTER III.

The Destruction of Jerusalem.

The Jews remain to this day not only the guardians of the Old Testament Scriptures, but living witnesses

of the truth of many prophecies, which, in the first ages of their history, unfolded their fate until the latest generations. Jewish and heathen historians fully describe the dreadful miseries which they suffered when all their cities were laid waste, when Jerusalem itself was destroyed in the seventieth year of the Christian era, and the remnant of their race, after an almost uninterrupted possession of Judea by their forefathers for fifteen hundred years, were driven from their country and scattered throughout the world. A brief detail of the unparalleled miseries which they then endured may serve to connect their former history with their subsequent alike unparalleled fate, and to show that the prophecies respecting the destruction of Jerusalem are as circumstantial and precise, and were as minutely fulfilled, as those in which their more recent and present history may now be read.

The Israelites were chosen to be a peculiar people. The worship of the only living and true God was maintained among them alone for many ages, while idolatry and polytheism (or the worship of many gods) otherwise universally prevailed. But the Father of the universe is no respecter of persons. A divine law was given to the descendants of Abraham; and blessings and curses were set before them, to cleave to their race in every age, according as they would observe and obey the commandments of the Lord, or refuse to hearken unto his voice, and to do all his commandments and statutes. Their history, and their continued preservation as a people, is thus an express record and manifestation of the doings of Providence. To read of their calamities is to see the judgments of God; and to compare them with the prophecies is to witness the truth of his word. There were intermingled seasons

of prosperity and triumph, or of oppression and misery as they enjoyed or forfeited their promised blessings, throughout the long period that they dwelt in the land of Canaan. But their punishments were to rise progressively with their sins; and so awfully sinful were the inhabitants of Jerusalem after the time of their merciful visitation had passed, and when the dark unbroken era of their miseries began, that Josephus, their great historian, and the greatest of their generals in their wars with the Romans, has recorded his opinion that, had they delayed their coming, the city would have been swallowed up by an earthquake or overflowed by water, or, as it was worse than Sodom, would have been destroyed by fire from heaven.* The vial of wrath was not poured out till the measure of their iniquities was full.

Instruments are never wanting for the execution of the purposes of God; nor, when needful for the confirmation of his word, is there any want of full testimony that his declared purposes have been fulfilled. There is nothing similar in history to the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, and to the miseries which its inhabitants inflicted and brought upon themselves by their savage barbarity and unyielding obstinacy; nor was there ever any other city or country of whose destruction, devastation, and misery, there is so clear and authenticated a detail. Josephus, himself a Jew, and an eye-witness of the facts he relates, gives a circumstantial account of the whole war, which furnishes complete evidence, not only of the truth of what Moses and the prophets had foretold, but also of all that, in

* Josephus's History of the Wars of the Jews, book 5, chap. 13, § 6.

clearer vision, and to the perturbation and astonishment of his disciples, Christ had explicitly revealed concerning its then approaching fate. Heathen writers also record many of the facts.

The prophecies from the Old Testament and from the New, relative to the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, are so numerous, that the insertion of them at length would occupy a greater space than can here be devoted to the consideration of the subject. The reader may peruse them as they are to be found in the written word. Levit. 26 : 14, &c. ; Deut. 28 : 15, &c. ; Isa. 29 : 1, &c. ; Ezek. 6 : 7 ; Jer. 26 : 18 ; Micah, 3 : 12 ; Matt. 21 : 33, &c. ; 22 : 1-7 ; 24 ; Mark, 13 ; Luke, 20 : 9-19 ; 21 ; 23 : 27-31. They require no other exposition of their meaning. Exclusive of literal predictions, frequent allusions are interspersed throughout the Gospels respecting the abolition of the Mosaic dispensation, and the utter subversion of the Jewish state.

A nation of fierce countenance, of an unknown tongue, and swift as the eagle flieth, were to come from a distant land against the Jews—to despoil them of all their goods—to besiege them in all their gates—to bring down their high and fenced walls. They were to be left few in number—to be slain before their enemies—the pride of their power was to be broken—their cities were to be laid waste, and themselves to be destroyed—to be brought to nought—to be plucked from off their own land—to be sold into slavery, and to be so despised that none would buy them. Their high places were to be rendered desolate—their bones to be scattered about their altars—Jerusalem was to be encompassed round about—to be besieged with a mount—to have forts raised against it—to be ploughed over like a field—to become heaps, and to come to an

end. The sword, the famine, and the pestilence were to destroy them.

The Jews lived fearless of judgments like these, when they dwelt in peace, and would not listen to the voice of Jesus. They would have no king but Cæsar; and they trusted in the power of the Roman empire as the security of their state. But He whom they rejected showed how God had rejected them, how they were filling up the measure of their fathers, and how all these judgments that had been denounced of old, and others of which their fathers had not heard, were to be felt by many, and to be all witnessed by some who were living then. And the Man of sorrows, whose face was set as a flint against his own unequalled sufferings, and who shed not a tear on his own account, was moved to pity, and his heart was melted into tenderness, on contemplating the great crimes and the coming calamities of the wicked, impenitent, and devoted city: "when he beheld Jerusalem, he wept over it."

The expiration of thirty-six years from the death of Christ to the destruction of Jerusalem; the death, previous to that event, of at least two of the evangelists who record the prophecies concerning it; the manner in which the predictions and allusions respecting the fate of Jerusalem are interwoven throughout the Gospel; the warning given to the disciples of Christ to escape from the impending calamities, and the annunciation of the signs whereby they would know of their approach; the dread that was cherished by some of the earliest converts to the Christian faith, that the day of judgment was then at hand, and which had arisen from the prophecies concerning the destruction of Jerusalem being closely connected with those rela-

tive to the second coming of Christ and the end of the world (all of which things his disciples had asked him to reveal;) the unanimous assent of antiquity to the prior publication of the Gospel; and the continued truth of the prophecy still manifested in Jerusalem being yet trodden down of the Gentiles; afford as full a proof as could now be thought of, that the predictions were delivered previous to the event.

No coincidence can be closer in relation to the facts, than that which subsists between the predictions of Jesus and the narrative of the Jewish historian. Yet, as the reader will afterward perceive, this coincidence is not more clear than that which subsists between the testimony of modern unbelievers and those prophecies which refer to the past and present desolation of Judca.

Wars, rumors of wars and commotions, nation rising against nation and kingdom against kingdom, famines, pestilences, and earthquakes in divers places, though the greatest of human evils that mortals fear, were to be but the "beginning of sorrows"—the heralds of heavier woes. Many false Christs were to appear, and to deceive many. The disciples of Jesus were to be persecuted, afflicted, imprisoned, hated of all nations, and brought before rulers and kings for his name's sake, and many of them were to be put to death. Iniquity was to abound, and the love of many was to wax cold, but the Gospel of the kingdom was to be preached in all the world. The abomination of desolation was to be seen standing in the place where it ought not. Jerusalem was to be compassed about with armies, a trench was to be cast about it, and they were to be hemmed in on every side. And there were to be fearful sights and great signs from heaven. These were to be the signs that the end of Jerusalem was at

hand. And there was to be great distress upon the land, and wrath upon the people; the tribulation was to be such as had never been, and would never be. The Jews were to fall by the edge of the sword; a remnant was to be led captive into all nations; of the temple, and of Jerusalem itself, one stone was not to be left upon another, and it was to be trodden down of the Gentiles till the time of the Gentiles should be fulfilled.

These prophecies were delivered in a time of perfect peace, and yet were all fulfilled ere the lapse of a single generation. The deceptions that were practised by false Christs or pretended prophets, occasioned some of the earliest of the commotions which soon spread over Judea. Every city in Syria became the seat of a civil war. The Jews were goaded on to revolt by the indignities and oppressions to which they were subjected under Florus, the Roman procurator. They openly rebelled at last against the Romans. These wars and rumors of wars and commotions were not confined to Syria. In Alexandria, fifty thousand Jews were slaughtered at one time. Italy was so convulsed, that in the brief space of two years four emperors suffered death. Famines and pestilences also prevailed. There was a great mortality at Babylon and at Rome. There were great earthquakes in divers places, by which different cities were overthrown. "The constitution of nature," says Josephus, "was confounded, and no common calamities were portended." Signs and fearful sights there were which might have awed the most daring. Iniquity abounded, and even Christian faith and love decayed. The name of Christians became a signal for persecution and a mark for hatred. They were taken before rulers and kings.

Paul, deserted by false brethren, stood alone before Nero. The bodies of Christians, covered over with combustible matter, lighted up the streets of Rome. But though the disciples of Jesus were hated, persecuted, imprisoned, afflicted, scourged, and many of them slain, burned, or crucified, the Gospel of the kingdom was preached from Spain to India, and published throughout the world. They bore unto the death the triumph of their faith; but in the judgments of God against Jerusalem not a hair of their heads perished. For the last sign was given. The idolatrous ensigns of the Romans spread over Judea. Jerusalem was compassed about with armies. These, for a time, again withdrew. Many escaped from the city. The Christians, forewarned, as Eusebius relates, fled unto Pella in the mountains. But multitudes of others, going up to the passover, or fleeing for a temporary security of their property and lives, crowded within the walls of Jerusalem. And when the people of the prince came, (of Vespasian, who was chosen emperor of Rome while in Judea,) there was no escaping. The city and the sanctuary were about to be destroyed. And the day of the wrath of God was come upon Jerusalem.

Jesus having been crucified, Cæsar disowned, and the sceptre departed, the Jews were without a law-giver and a king, when the conquerors of the world came to conquer them who had proved rebellious against God and man. The robbers who had banded together amidst the preceding commotions, and resorted to the mountains of Judea, finding no protection from the power of the Romans, flocked to Jerusalem, and, joined by the zealots and the lawless mob, ruled over it. Plunder, murder, and destruction were still their work. The common provisions for the siege were

not only pillaged, but burnt. Faction fought against faction, and the blood of thousands was shed by their brethren. Contests were not less frequent or severe with enemies without, than within. The priests were slain at the altar, and their bones were scattered around it. The robbers or zealots at last held undisputed sway. But famine soon preyed indiscriminately on all. The sewers were searched for food; girdles and shoes, and the leather from off their shields, were gnawed. The most loathsome refuse was greedily devoured. The bodies of the famished fell dead in the streets. And the most appalling fact, which soon became notorious, and the discovery of which struck the whole suffering city with horror, and the besiegers with astonishment and rage,—of a lady, once rich and noble, slaying and roasting and eating her own sucking child,—not only shows with what prophetic truth and pity Jesus had bewailed the “wo of them that give suck in those days,” and Moses had described, fifteen hundred years before, the very circumstances of the case, Deut. 28:56, &c. but also forbids that the most callous heart should seek further witness of great tribulation, such as none could be like. Yet the infuriated Jews, though they despaired of divine assistance when they heard of so unnatural and monstrous an act, would not yield. Of no treaty would they hear. Discomfited by their desperate assaults, the Romans built a wall, and hemmed them in on every side. “Crucify him! crucify him!” had once been their cry and that of their fathers, who imprecated the blood of Jesus on themselves and on their children; and surely it was upon them. Of fugitives from the famine, when taken prisoners, five hundred were crucified daily without the walls of Jerusalem, till room could not be found for the crosses, nor crosses for the

bodies. The purposed object of such cruelty failed. for even so sad and shocking a spectacle did not intimidate into submission the desperadoes who ruled over the wretched city. In the lacerated entrails of some of the slaughtered captives gold was discovered, which, loving it as their life, they had swallowed in the hope of escape: and the Arabians and Syrians, who were confederate with the Romans, the harpies attendant on their camps, searched within the bodies of deserters for the treasures supposed to be hidden there; and thus, in one night, two thousand were dissected.

It is painful to dwell on a tale of accumulated horrors, and the example of Jesus forbids not Christians to weep. Let it suffice to be told: a hundred and fifteen thousand dead bodies were carried out at one gate during the siege; six hundred thousand in all: these were the poor, to be cast out was their only burial. Many houses besides were filled with dead bodies; they were also heaped together in every open space, till there was no ground to be seen, nor was there any place in the city but what they covered. A mixed multitude, about six thousand, perished amid the burning cloisters of the temple, or cast themselves down headlong and died; ten thousand others were there slain; the city sewers were choked up with human carcasses; eleven hundred thousand perished during the siege and in the sacking of the city and the attacks of the slaughterers; and when Jerusalem was given to the devouring flame, every street ran down with blood.

Jerusalem was devoted to utter destruction. Her walls were destroyed, her battlements were taken away, for they were not the Lord's. The city and the sanctuary were razed from the foundation. The pass-

ing of the ploughshare over the place where it had been was the last act of the Romans, as consigning Jerusalem to perpetual desolation, and was also the completion of their destined work, when they had laid it even with the ground, and had not left one stone of the temple upon another but what had been thrown down.

The Jews were slain with the edge of the sword. Exclusive of those who were slaughtered in the seditions and the siege, two hundred and forty thousand were slain throughout the cities of Judah and in the neighboring countries, as enumerated by Josephus, who specifies the numbers that were slain in each separate place. Ninety-seven thousand prisoners were led into captivity. Many were taken into Egypt, and were there sold for slaves. Deut. 28:68. The slave marts were glutted with their vast number, till none would buy them. And on one occasion above eleven thousand captives were, through wilfulness or neglect, left destitute of food, and perished by hunger.

So closely did the judgments of God cleave unto the Jews, and so fully did they all come upon them and overtake them, that, as pertaining to the destruction of Jerusalem and the devastation of their cities and country, every one of them was literally fulfilled.

Jerusalem was called the city of the Lord, and Zion was his holy mountain, where alone on all the earth praise had waited on him. Yet the sins of Jerusalem could not be concealed from his sight; and his long-suffering patience, which had been tried in vain, would not always strive even with the city which he had chosen to put his name there. And when its iniquities had come to the full,—when in the day of its visitation it would not be instructed, or made clean, or wash it-

self from its wickedness, though God had sent his Son to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, and a fountain was opened for sin and for uncleanness,—and when the Jews had rejected the Savior, and would have other lords to have dominion over them,—God would not pity nor spare it any more; his soul was avenged on such a nation; and yet his anger was not turned away, but his hand was stretched out still; and he gave Jacob to the curse and Israel to reproaches. And if God spared not the natural branches, take heed that he spare not thee. If the recompense of their iniquities, till he rewarded them double, was paid into the bosom of the children of Abraham his friend, who art thou, or what is thy father's house, that any sin of thine should pass unpunished, if thou continue impenitent; and if thus, in the time of thy merciful visitation, the Savior be rejected and crucified again?

The security of nations rests not in the strength of their bulwarks, for none were stronger than those of Jerusalem; nor in the abundance of their riches, for such was the wealth accumulated in that city, that, after its demolition, gold was reduced in Syria to the half of its former value. "Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain;" and sin must finally be the ruin of any people. The combined sins of private individuals form the accumulated iniquity of a nation. And when these become greater and greater, the time is rapidly advancing when they rise up to heaven, and its thunderbolts can be restrained no more. There are other drunkards beside those of Ephraim, on whom judgment was denounced, who are not less guilty than werethey. And that covetousness which is idolatry, and for the iniquity of which the Jews were smitten, yet abounds. For where is the

practical influence of the love of God to be seen like that which the love of the world displays, or where is the fulfilling of the law of Christ in bearing one another's burdens, compared with the signs of mammon's rule, in each seeking his own wealth? But what, the reader may ask, can one man do to avert national calamities, or to lessen the amount of the sins of any people? Were each man to repent, as in Nineveh of old, all would be saved, though the threatened judgment were within forty days of its approach. And who, that continues in sin, and that thinks on Jerusalem as it lay even with the ground, can say, that were the judgments of God to come upon his country, he would have no share in the guilt that brought them down? "I sought for a man among them," said He to whom all judgment pertains, "that should make up the hedge, and stand in the gap before me for the land, that I should not destroy it, and I found none."

But it is not to national and temporal judgments, though they might be terrible as were those of Jerusalem, but to his own individual and eternal destiny, that every man has chiefly to give heed that he may flee from the wrath to come, and lay hold on eternal life. Every man must stand or fall to his own master. And as an earthly king, by making a fearful example in the punishment of some, would strike the hearts of his rebellious subjects with terror, so is Jerusalem set as an example before us, to show that iniquity will not pass unpunished, and that the terrors of the Lord, and his threatenings against impenitent sinners, shall all be executed, even as his word was true, and his wrath great upon Jerusalem.

And it is no just reason, that, "because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily," the

hearts of men should therefore "be fully set in them to do evil." Seeing that the judgment itself against every evil work is sure, such conduct would be to all, what it proved to the Jews, a treasuring up of wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgments of God. And the passing of the Roman ploughshare over the site of that desolated city which should have been the Lord's, is but a faint emblem of that utter desolation which must come over the soul of every one who revolts now against the reign of the Redeemer, when every false foundation shall at last be razed, every sinful pleasure be destroyed, every towering imagination that exalteth itself against God shall be laid even with the ground, and every delusive hope be destroyed.

But while we could not leave Jerusalem in its ruins in showing how the word of the Lord was executed upon it, without imparting some warning to those who, in a spiritual sense, are not the children of Zion, we cannot close this tale of woe without expressing the hope that the time is hastening when Jerusalem shall no longer be termed forsaken, and that the prophetic admonition, of another import, may now be received and acted upon, even as if it were a Christian precept. Ye that make mention of the Lord, ye to whom prayer is a familiar work, keep not silence and give him no rest, cease not from fervent importunity, till he establish and make Jerusalem a praise in the earth.

And seeing that the time is come when men go not up either to Samaria or to Jerusalem to worship, but that the grace of God hath appeared, and that the true worshippers now worship the Father in spirit and in truth, let this office, dear reader, be yours; let your body be a temple of the Holy Ghost, your heart an al-

tar to your God, and let your life no less than your lips show forth his praise and be devoted to his glory. And if thus you would ever look to the Redeemer from all iniquity, as both the author and the finisher of your faith, who once was crucified for the sins of men without the walls of Jerusalem, and to whom all judgment and power are now committed by the Father; and if you would receive the Savior in all his offices, to teach, to atone, to intercede for you, and to rule over you by his word and Spirit; you may securely rest on that rock which is Christ, and look also to a city which hath foundations that can never be moved, whose maker and whose builder is God. And though your body must be laid in the dust, being dissolved, you shall be with Christ; and the transition of your spirit, after you have lived soberly, righteously, and godly upon earth, shall be even more glorious than that of Jerusalem, when it shall be raised from its ruins, and become, as yet it shall be, an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations.

CHAPTER IV.

The Jews.

Were we to seek a single word wherewith to confound the adversaries of the Gospel, and to confute all their arguments against the inspiration of Scripture—that word would be, *the Jews*. We need not urge either the peculiarity of their fate ever since the days of Abraham, a period of three thousand seven hundred years, nor the miraculous preservation for ages, since their dispersion, of their exiled, wandering, miserable

race. For we have only to read a multiplicity of prophecies concerning them, as they are written in the earliest records in the world, and, without once hinting what they are, to ask whose history they relate; and there scarcely is a man so ignorant in any country under heaven, who would not answer in one word, *the Jews*. To all the inhabitants of the earth the scriptural appeal may here be made in relation to facts, of which all are witnesses—judge ye what we say. It is needful only to look to the Jews, and to hear Moses and the prophets, to know that the word must have been of God. And he that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

“I will scatter you among the heathen, and draw out a sword after you; and your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste.—And upon them that are left alive of you, I will send a faintness into their hearts, in the land of their enemies; and the sound of a shaken leaf shall chase them; and they shall flee as fleeing from a sword; and they shall fall when none pursueth.—And ye shall have no power to stand before your enemies. And ye shall perish among the heathen; and the land of your enemies shall eat you up. And they that are left of you shall pine away in their iniquities in your enemies’ land.—And yet for all that when they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them. Lev. 26:33, 36-39, 44. And the Lord shall scatter you among the nations, and ye shall be left few in number among the heathen, whither the Lord will lead you. Deut. 4:27. The Lord shall cause thee to be smitten before thine enemies: thou shalt go out one way against them, and flee seven ways before them; and shalt be removed

into all the kingdoms of the earth.—The Lord shall smite thee with madness, and blindness, and astonishment of heart; and thou shalt grope at noon-day as the blind gropeth in darkness, and thou shalt not prosper in thy ways; and thou shalt be only oppressed and spoiled evermore, and no man shall save thee.—Thy sons and thy daughters shall be given to another people.—There shall be no might in thine hand. The fruit of thy land and all thy labors shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway: so that thou shalt be mad for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.—Thou shalt become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations whither the Lord shall lead thee.—All these curses shall come upon thee, and shall pursue thee and overtake thee till thou be destroyed: because thou hearkenedst not unto the voice of the Lord thy God;—and they shall be upon thee for a sign and for a wonder, and upon thy seed for ever. Because thou servedst not the Lord thy God with joyfulness, and with gladness of heart, for the abundance of all things: therefore shalt thou serve thine enemies, which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things; and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed thee. Deut. 28: 25, 28, 29, 32–34, 37, 45–48. If thou wilt not observe to do all the words of this law that are written in this book, that thou mayest fear this glorious and fearful name—THE LORD THY GOD then the Lord will make thy plagues wonderful and the plagues of thy seed, even great plagues and of long continuance, and sore sicknesses and of long continuance.—And it shall come to pass, that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you;

so the Lord will rejoice over you to destroy you, and to bring you to nought; and thou shalt be plucked from off the land whither thou goest to possess it. And the Lord shall scatter thee among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other;—and among these nations thou shalt find no ease, neither shall the sole of thy foot have rest; but the Lord shall give thee a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrows of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shalt have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see.” Deut. 28:58, 59, 63–68.

“I will cause them to be removed into all kingdoms of the earth. I will cast them out into a land that they know not, where I will show them no favor. I will scatter them also among the heathen, whom neither they nor their fathers have known. Jer. 15:4. 16:13; 9:16. I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth for their hurt, to be a reproach, a proverb, a taunt, and a curse, in all places whither I shall drive them; and I will send the sword, the famine, and the pestilence among them, till they be consumed from off the land that I gave unto them and to their fathers. I will bereave them of children. Jer. 24:9, 10; 15:7. I will deliver them to be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, to be a curse, and an astonishment, and a hissing, and a reproach, even among all the nations whither I have driven them. Jer. 29:18. I will execute judgments in thee, and the whole remnant of thee will I scatter into all the winds.

Ezek. 5:10. I will scatter them among the nations, among the heathens, and disperse them in the countries. Ezek. 12:15. They shall cast their silver in the streets, and their gold shall be removed; their silver and their gold shall not be able to deliver them in the day of the wrath of the Lord; they shall not satisfy their souls, neither fill their bowels; because it is the stumbling-block of their iniquity. For the iniquity of his covetousness was I wroth, and smote him. Ezek. 7:19. Isa. 57:17. I will sift the house of Israel among the nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. Amos, 9:9. Death shall be chosen rather than life by all the residue of them that remain of this evil family, which remain in all the places whither I have driven them, saith the Lord of hosts. They shall be wanderers among the nations. Jer. 8:3. Hos. 9:17. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and convert, and be healed. Then said I, Lord, how long? and he answered, Until the cities be wasted without inhabitant, and the houses without man, and the land be utterly desolate, and the Lord have removed men far away, and there be a great forsaking in the midst of the land. Isa. 6:10-12. Though they go into captivity before their enemies, thence will I command the sword, and it shall slay them; and I will set mine eyes upon them for evil and not for good. Amos, 9:4. I will make a full end of all the nations whither I have driven thee; but I will not make a full end of thee, but correct thee in measure; yet will I not utterly cut thee off, or leave thee wholly unpunished. Jer. 46:28. The children of Israel shall abide many days without a king, and without a prince, and

without a sacrifice, and without an image, and without an ephod, and without teraphim. Afterward shall the children of Israel return, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king; and shall fear the Lord and his goodness in the latter days." Hosea, 3:4, 5.

All these predictions respecting the Jews are delivered with the clearness of history and the confidence of truth. They represent the manner, the extent, the nature and the continuance of their dispersion, their persecutions, their sufferings, their blindness, their feebleness, fearfulness, and faint-heartedness; their ceaseless wanderings, their hardened impenitence, their insatiable avarice; and the grievous oppressions, the continued spoliation, the universal mockery, the unextinguishable existence and unlimited diffusion of their race.

Strong were the ties which bound the Jews to Judea. It was not only a glorious land, the land of their fathers and the land of promise, but they held it as the peculiar gift of Heaven, and there only could many of the ordinances of their religion be observed. And as they could not be separated from the temple till it was blazing around them, so nothing but the strongest compulsion could tear them from their country; and the unavailing closeness with which they clung to it, and their entire separation from it, were prophetically described with strict historical fidelity; for they were truly rooted up, and plucked, and consumed from off their own land. On a desperate attempt to repossess it, when their numbers had increased and their scattered strength was again combined, they fell by the edge of the sword in such numbers that, in the words of prophecy and of a heathen writer, very few of them escaped. They were banished from Judea, and by ar

imperial edict it was death for a Jew to set a foot in Jerusalem, though every Gentile might tread it down.

But the extent is still more remarkable than the manner of their dispersion. Many prophecies described it, and foretold, thousands of years ago, what we now behold. "They have been scattered among the nations, among the heathen, among the people, even from one end of the earth unto the other. They have been removed into all the kingdoms of the earth. They have been scattered unto all the winds, and dispersed throughout all countries, among nations which neither they nor their fathers had known"—the very names of which were unheard of by the prophets, and in countries the very existence of which was unknown long after the Jews had become wanderers among the nations. They have traversed the wide world; and there is not a kingdom on the face of the earth where they are not to be found. They abound in Poland, in Turkey, in Germany, and in Holland. In Russia, France, Spain, Italy, Britain, and America, they are more thinly scattered. In Persia, China, and India, on the east and on the west of the Ganges, they are few in numbers among the heathen. They have trod the snows of Siberia and the sands of the burning desert; and the European traveler hears of their existence in regions which he cannot reach, even in the very interior of Africa. From the one end of the earth unto the other, the Jews, and the Jews alone, have been scattered among all nations.

But the history of the Jews throughout the whole world, and in every age since their dispersion, verifies the most minute predictions, which clearly delineated all the marked characteristics of their stricken race. And dispersed, as every where they are, not only does that very fact bear witness to the divine truth of the

word which foretold it, but in every land visible demonstration has been given, century after century, and is still given, seventeen hundred years after the expulsion of the Jews from Judea, that all those judgments have come upon them, and have pursued them, and have overtaken them, which, before they entered it, were denounced against them, if they would not hearken to the voice of the Lord their God, to observe to do all his commandments and his statutes.

They were to find no ease nor rest among the nations whither they were to be driven. Their plagues, and the plagues of their race, were to be great and wonderful, and of long continuance. They were to be oppressed, and crushed, and spoiled evermore, &c. Various as is the history of nations in divers parts of the world, and of the same people at different periods, that of the Jews, since their dispersion, has been every where the same. The first century of the Christian era saw Jerusalem laid even with the ground, their cities and their country ravaged, the Jews led into captivity, and driven from their own land—homeless wanderers throughout the world. In the second, under one Roman emperor, five hundred thousand of them were slain. They were greatly persecuted in the third by another. In the fourth they were dispersed into various countries as vile fugitives and vagabonds; and previous to their banishment from Rome, their ears were cut off. In the fifth they were driven out of Alexandria, and severely oppressed and persecuted throughout the Persian dominions. Many of them, having sought in vain every where for rest, and having been allured by a false Messiah with the hope of regaining Judea and subduing their enemies, rebelled against the Romans in the sixth century; and a slaughter, like

that by which their forefathers had fallen, was again renewed in Palestine. And such was the oppression of their kindred in Africa, that they were prohibited from any exercise of their religion, even in caverns. They were grievously persecuted during the seventh century, and expelled from Jerusalem, from Antioch, and from Spain. Multitudes fled into France, where the only choice that was given them, was to renounce their religion, or be despoiled of all their goods. Mahomet at the same time subdued the Jews who dwelt in Arabia, and after exacting a heavy tribute, forcibly expelled them. A law was enacted and enforced throughout the Mahometan dominions in the succeeding century, which occasioned a double misery to many a Jewish family, whereby any child, on renouncing Judaism and professing to believe in Mahomet, became the sole inheritor of the property of his parents and brethren. In the ninth and tenth centuries the caliphs, or successors of Mahomet, whose power extended from Spain to India, despoiled the Jews of their property by repeated exactions, closed their academies in Persia, caused them to be distinguished by a mark of infamy, and tried their endurance to the uttermost, till they fled for refuge to the deserts of Arabia. A temporary respite throughout the greater part of Europe, from any peculiar oppression, (except those troubles and indignities to which they were ever subjected, during which time their covetousness had unfettered operation,) prepared the way for spoliations and persecutions, which continued throughout several centuries with little intermission, and which were too multiplied to admit of detail.

It would indeed be fearful, as it would be endless, to tell of the unceasing spoliations and unsparing cruel-

ties which were exercised toward them in those dark and barbarous times, when men seemed fitted like demons for being the executioners of divine wrath, and when such was the blindness and madness of the Jews, that by their usury and covetousness they often provoked the ferocity of their enemies, and plunderers, and murderers. Nor can any tongue of man tell, or pen write, what trembling of heart and failing of eyes were theirs, or what sorrow of mind, what sore sicknesses of soul, what madness for the sight of their eyes that they did see, what pining away and choosing of death rather than life, were the portion of the residue of this evil family among the nations whither they were driven; in the oppressions and crushings, the riflings and banishments, the miseries and the massacres, which, time after time, were relentlessly inflicted upon them throughout Spain, Portugal, France, Germany, Hungary, Turkey, Italy, and England.

Did not every account conspire in attesting the facts, the nature and extent of the miseries which the Jews then suffered in many kingdoms would be altogether incredible. "They were every where," as is recorded in a history of the middle ages, "the objects of popular insult and oppression, frequently of a general massacre." They were massacred in great numbers at Orsana, Valentia, Barcelona, and Toledo; and throughout Navarre and Arragon in Spain; in France from one extremity to the other; throughout Languedoc, Guienne, Poitou, Touraine, Anjou, and Maine; at Trani and Naples; at Ulm, where all the Jewish inhabitants were slain; at Frankfort, where, exclusive of many who were slaughtered, one hundred and eighty perished in the flames; and in different other towns of Franconia and Bavaria, where, in one persecution

twelve thousand of them perished. "At Verdun, Treves, Mentz, Spire, Worms," to use the words of Gibbon, "many thousands of them were pillaged and massacred. A remnant was saved by a feigned and transient conversion; but the greater part of them barricaded their houses, and precipitated themselves, their families, and their wealth, into the rivers or the flames. These massacres and depredations on the Jews were renewed at each crusade." Their sufferings were no less terrible in England than throughout the continent. The whole nation united in the persecution of them. They truly were, as Sir Walter Scott describes them, "alike detested by the credulous and prejudiced vulgar, and persecuted by the greedy and rapacious nobility. Except, perhaps, the flying fish," he adds, "there was no race existing on the earth, in the air, or the waters, who were the objects of such an unrelenting, general, and relentless persecution as the Jews of this period. Their persons and their property were exposed to every turn of popular fury." At Norwich nothing could restrain the fury of the people till the objects of it were destroyed by a general massacre of the Jews. Many of them were slain at Stamford, St. Edmund's, and Lincoln, and in the Isle of Ely, whither crowds of them had fled. But at York their sufferings were most appalling, and worse than death. Fifteen hundred Jews, including women and children, having shut themselves up in the castle, were refused all quarter; their silver and their gold could not save them, for they could not purchase their lives at any price, and, frantic with despair, they perished by a mutual slaughter; each father was the murderer of his wife and of his children, when death became their only deliverance. In England at York, as in Palestine at

Massada, (the last fortress which they held in their native land, where nearly a thousand perished in a similar manner,) and at Lisbon, Toledo, Nuremberg, Frankfort, and in numberless places beside, death was chosen by them rather than life; and the fear of man overcoming all fear of God, they acted on the choice.

These dreadful persecutions were uniformly accompanied with pillage. "They were spoiled evermore. Their substance and their treasure were given to the spoil without price."

They were bereaved of their children by the artful policy of the Mahometans, who bribed their children to abjure their religion, and to forsake their parents; and in a more forcible manner by Roman Catholics, who took them from their families to be brought up in monasteries—a practice which was not only sanctioned but enjoined by the canons of different councils. When the Jews were banished from Lisbon, none under fourteen years of age were suffered to depart. Their sons and their daughters were given to another people.

"They found no ease among the nations, neither had the sole of their foot rest," &c. There is scarcely a single kingdom from which, independent of their oppressions, they have not been publicly and repeatedly banished. From France they were seven times banished. And, at one time, six hundred thousand Jews were expelled from Spain, and found no where either ease or rest.

They were to be "a proverb, a by-word, a taunt, a curse, an astonishment, a hissing, a reproach among all nations, and in all places, whither they should be driven." And all these they, and they alone, have been, and still are. They have in all places been subjected to innumerable indignities, which it requires

the full meaning of each and all of these epithets and maledictions adequately to express and represent. A leathern girdle bound about them; a piece of cloth of some peculiar color, worn so as to be seen of every passer by; a clog tied to their body, and dragged behind them at every step, or cast in derision and ignominy before them, are some of the badges of distinction or marks of infamy which they have often been compelled to use, and which exposed them openly, wherever they went, to every insult and mockery. And were it to be asked, what is the one only by-word that is used by all nations, and common to the world, or the universal stigma that is applied in every country to a single name, the answer would rightly be, in every language, A JEW. And may we not, reader, whoever you are, appeal to yourself, and ask how often you have made use of this very proverb and by-word; and if you must own that you have done so times without number, must you not own also that your own lips, however unconsciously, have as often borne witness, on your part, to the truth of this most marvellous prophecy; and that it has only to be thought upon, in order that you may as freely own that He alone who knoweth all things, could have foreseen and foretold so exclusively singular and astonishing a fact, and that in this, as in every other respect, the Jews are a sign and a wonder?

It was for their sins that they were to be punished, but *covetousness* was the stumbling-block of their iniquity, the removing of which has yet to prepare the way of their conversion. Isa. 57 : 14, 17; Ezek. 7 : 19. The covetousness of the Jews is proverbial. Among them the most exorbitant usury is often the regular business of the rich. But the love of money is not

confined to these ; it is an iniquity which cleaves to all their race—the very idol of their hearts. It is often manifested in the streets of London, for instance, frequently to the annoyance of all who pass by. And their hurried gait, their out-stretched arm, their pleading voice, their care-worn countenance, their eager eye, their squalid figure, and their bending form, indicate a soul bowed down to mammon, though their traffic be so pitiful as the selling of an old garment, an orange, or a pencil. A new heart has to be given them, and a new spirit to be put within them, the veil has to be taken off, and this stumbling-block to be put out of the way, before they can see a Messiah in a crucified Savior, or find a way to that kingdom which is not of this world.

But the greatest apparent contradictions and contrarieties, which it might well seem impossible to reconcile, are involved in their most wonderful fate, and yet each extreme tallies perfectly with its corresponding prediction. While they were to be oppressed and crushed away, their often renewed possession of wealth is not only implied in their being spoiled evermore, but it is explicitly foretold that when they shall be gathered out of all nations, they shall take their silver and their gold with them, and inherit the riches of the Gentiles. And, after all their spoliations, silver and gold is theirs in the greatest abundance. And from their large share in the funds of every kingdom in Europe, it may not now be difficult to see how they shall yet possess the riches of the Gentiles. Isa. 60 : 9 ; 61 : 6.* But though the truth of His word, and the

* There is, however, a striking exception, in regard to the accumulation of wealth by the Jews, which deserves, as such,

workings of His overruling providence be thus manifested, it is not worldly wealth that can purchase the blessing of God: for covetousness is idolatry, with the iniquity of which the Lord is ever wroth. But all,

to be particularly noted. And their own land was marked as the spot where no prosperity whatever was to be theirs, when the judgments of God on account of their iniquities should come upon them and overtake them. Before their entrance into Judea, it was numbered among their blessings, that, if they would carefully observe to do all his commandments, "the Lord shall greatly bless thee in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee to possess it. The Lord shall make thee plenteous in the fruit of thy ground, in the land which the Lord sware unto thy fathers to give thee. The Lord shall open unto thee his good treasure, the heavens to give the rain unto thy land in his season, and to bless all the works of thine hands: and thou shalt lend unto many nations, and thou shalt not borrow. And the Lord shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath, if thou hearken to the commandments of the Lord thy God." Lev. 26 : 4, 6; Deut. 28 : 11-13. Among the curses for disobedience it was on the other hand denounced, "All the trees and the fruit of thy land shall the locust consume. The stranger that is within thee shall get up above thee very high; and thou shalt come down very low. He shall lend unto thee, but thou shalt not lend unto him: he shall be the head, and thou shalt be the tail." Deut. 28 : 42--44. The abject, dependent, and impoverished state to which they would be reduced *within their own land* is here forcibly described. And their peculiar fate in it, and their mean condition there, in relation to the stranger that would possess it, represents to the life how very low the poor Jew has become in the land of his fathers, in the presence of the imperious Roman of old, or of the lordly Turk in past ages, or in the present day. The prophecy was amply fulfilled, and the blessings and privileges which were promised them, and which they long enjoyed in Judea, and their superiority above the stranger that was within their gates, were altogether reversed, when, on their having forfeited the divine protection and favor, the Romans subjugated Judea, and got

however high or however low their rank, may learn from the fate of the Jews to observe carefully that admonition which their forefathers would not listen to from Jesus, and to the power of which they still are strangers—take heed and beware of covetousness.

up above them very high, and when the captive Jews came down so very low, that, even in their native land, they were indebted to the stranger within it for the very means of subsistence—to be repaid only by their being sold into slavery. And although, in almost every other region, the Jews, in the exercise of their covetousness, have gained much silver and gold, yet that loved occupation has never, since their dispersion, been practised by them in the land of Judea. From the want both of traffic and of the security of property in that desolated country, they could neither acquire wealth nor practise usury; and hence few of them have sought to dwell there. Whenever, however, for the love they bore to the land of their fathers, any of them, when permitted, have resided in Jerusalem or throughout Judea, their condition has indeed been very low. Benjamin of Tudela, a Jew, who traveled in the twelfth century, states, that the country which should have been their own, was then almost entirely abandoned by them. About two hundred of them, for the most part dyers of wool, lived together under David's Tower, and made there "a very little figure." They were even more sparingly scattered, and left few in number throughout the Holy Land. In later times the remnant of the tribe of Judah, in Jerusalem, has continued in the same very mean and dependant state, some of them as clerks and servants of the governor, and others having no subsistence but from charity. It may here be worthy of remark, as being perhaps one of the signs of the times, that recently their number has greatly increased in Jerusalem, and that many of them have of late been crowding toward Judea. Another prophetic and actual peculiarity, contradistinguishing, in some degree, their character as well as their fate in Judea and in other countries, is also very remarkable. While they exhibited the most desperate courage and fierce resolution in striving to retain possession of Judea, and in repeated attempts to recover it, there has been such a faintness in their hearts in

The Jews were to be smitten with blindness and astonishment of heart, to continue long, having their ears deaf, their eyes closed, and their hearts hardened ; and to grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness. Every civilized nation professes to believe in Jesus as the Savior of men, of whom all the Jewish prophets bore witness. But the Jews, though surrounded by the light of the Gospel, are still in blindness and darkness ; and their religious observances and opinions, as drawn from their own authorities, are the most frivolous and absurd imaginable. They have made the law of God void by their traditions. When Moses and the

the land of their enemies, that the sound of a fallen leaf would shake them. And although the most powerful of nations could scarcely pluck them from off their own land, they have never conquered for themselves a settlement in any part of the world, or subdued the feeblest people in the land of their enemies. There is still, however, one remarkable exception, in the present day, to that timidity and faint-heartedness which has long been the universal characteristic of the Jews in the land of their enemies, and which is indicated in their very appearance. In a late publication, (Walsh's Narrative,) it is stated that "the Jews in Constantinople are a very fierce and fanatic race ; persecution and suffering have not taught them moderation, and they pursue, even to death, any apostate from their own doctrines." It is also stated that "they have lately distinguished themselves in the Greek insurrection, by their inveterate hostility to the Greeks." Yet this, though certainly an exception to the general character of their race, is no exception to the truth of prophecy, which overlooks it not. It seems rather to be a sign of the approaching fulfillment of a specific prediction, the accomplishment of which is evidently future. "Turn you to the strong hold, ye prisoners of hope: even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto thee. When I have bent Judah for me, filled the bow with Ephraim, and raised up thy sons, O Zion, against thy sons, O Greece, and made thee as a sword of a mighty man." Zech. 9 : 12, 13.

prophets are read, there is a veil upon their hearts. And the people that long stood alone among the nations as the worshippers of the living God, now, when light has arisen upon the world, have lost the knowledge even of their own law, and are so blinded by their prejudices, and ignorant of the divine truths revealed in the Gospel, that they grope at noon-day, as the blind gropeth in darkness.

Their plagues, like their incredulity and impenitence, were to be of long continuance; and after a continuance of nearly eighteen hundred years, they are fresh upon them still, in many parts of the earth, as if they had commenced but yesterday. Throughout all the countries of the East, the Jews are, as they have ever been, the marked objects of unsparing scorn, and of un pitying cruelty. So unused are they to compassion, and so freely are they deprived of those rights which should be common to all men, that "any acts of kindness, or even of justice, exercised toward them" by any humane traveler, "excite at once, in Asia and Africa, the astonishment of the Jews and the indignation of the natives." Many rigid laws are still in force against them throughout almost every country in Europe. And it is only very recently, in some minor states, that a more liberal and enlightened policy has been acted on toward them. And who that either thinks on the great and wonderful miseries which every where they have suffered so long, or believes that the receiving of them shall be life from the dead to those who yet sit in darkness under the shadow of death, and to those also who have but a name to live, and yet are dead—can refrain from feeling a deep interest in their fate, or from cherishing an ever-earnest wish, and offering up many a fervent prayer, that the

close of their long-continued plagues may be hastening on, when God shall bind up the breach of his people, and heal the stroke of their wound ; and surely it is full time to try whether Christian kindness, and those efforts on which the blessing of God may be expected, may not be the means of preparing the way for their conversion, and for effecting far more, in a short space, toward that prophetic consummation of all their miseries, than all that coercive measures or savage cruelty ever have been, or ever could be, able to accomplish.

Many prophecies concerning the Jews, of more propitious import, are reserved for testimonies to future generations, if not to the present. To them the reader is referred, as they are to be found in Scripture. Deut. 30 : 3-5 ; Isa. 11 : 11, 12 ; 60 : 9, 10, &c. ; 61 : 4 ; Jer. 31 : 37, &c. ; Ezek. 36 ; 37 ; Zech. 9 : 12, &c. ; Amos, 9 : 13-15 ; Micah, 2 : 12. " And that throughout all the changes which have happened in the kingdoms of the earth from the days of Moses to the present time, which is more than thrée thousand three hundred years, nothing should have happened to prevent the possibility of the accomplishment of these prophecies but, on the contrary, that the state of the Jewish, and Christian, and Heathen nations at this day should be such as renders them easily capable, not only of a figurative, but even of a literal completion in every particular, if the will of God be so : this is a MIRACLE, which hath nothing parallel to it in the phenomena of nature."

In regard to the past, as we have seen, on a brief review of their miseries, the most wonderful and amazing facts, such as never occurred among any other people, form the ordinary narrative of the history of the Jews, and fulfill literally the prophecies concern-

ing them. These prophecies are ancient, as the oldest records in existence. They are clear in their meaning as any history can be. Many of them are apparently contradictory and irreconcilable to each other, and yet they are all literally true, and identified in every particular with the fate of the Jews. They were so unimaginable by human wisdom, that the whole compass of nature has never exhibited a parallel to the events. And the facts are visible, and present, and applicable, even to the most minute point. Could Moses, as an uninspired mortal, have described the history, the fate, the dispersion, the treatment, the dispositions of the Israelites to the present day, or for thirty-three centuries, seeing that he was astonished and amazed, on his descent from Sinai, at the change in their sentiments and in their conduct in the space of about as many days? Could various persons have testified, in different ages, of the self-same and of similar facts as wonderful as they have proved to be true? Could they have divulged so many secrets of futurity, when of necessity they were utterly ignorant of them all? or could they, by their own sagacity, have foretold events that were to happen hundreds and thousands of years thereafter, seeing that, like all mortal men, they knew not of themselves what a day or an hour would bring forth? The probabilities were infinite against them; for the mind of man often hangs in doubt and uncertainty over the nearest events and the most probable results; but in regard to remote ages, when thousands of years shall have passed away, and to facts respecting them contrary to all previous knowledge, experience, analogy, or conception, it feels that they are dark as death to mortal ken. And viewing only the dispersion of the Jews and some of its attendant cir-

cumstances—how their city was laid waste; their temple, which formed the constant place of their resort before, levelled with the ground and ploughed over like a field; their country ravaged and themselves murdered in mass, falling before the sword, the famine, and the pestilence;—how a remnant was left, but despoiled, persecuted, enslaved, and led into captivity; driven from their own land, not to a mountainous retreat, where they might subsist with safety, but dispersed among all nations, and left to the mercy of a world that every where hated and oppressed them, shattered in pieces like the wreck of a vessel in a mighty storm, scattered over the earth like fragments on the waters; and instead of disappearing or mingling among the nations, remaining a perfectly distinct people, in every kingdom the same; meeting every where the same insult, and mockery, and oppression; finding no resting-place without an enemy soon to dispossess them; multiplying amidst all their miseries, so that though they were left few in numbers, were they now to be restored, the land would overflow for the multitude of men; surviving their enemies; beholding unchanged the extinction of many nations, and the convulsions of all; robbed of their silver and gold, though cleaving to the love of them still, as the stumbling-block of their iniquity; often bereaved of their very children; disjoined and disorganized, but uniform and unaltered; ever bruised, but never broken; crushed alway, but not utterly destroyed; weak, fearful, sorrowful, and afflicted; often driven to madness at the spectacle of their own miseries; taken up in the lips of talkers; the taunt, and hissing, and infamy of all people; and continuing ever what they are to this day, a proverb and a by-word to the whole world:—

how did every fact, from its very nature, defy all conjecture; and how could mortal man, overlooking a hundred successive generations, have foretold any one of these wonders that are now conspicuous in these latter times? Who but the Father of spirits, possessed of perfect prescience, even of the knowledge of the will and of the actions of free, intelligent, and moral agents, could have revealed their unbounded and yet unceasing wanderings, unveiled all their destiny, and unmasked the minds of the Jews and of their enemies, in every age and in every clime? The creation of the world might as well be the work of chance as the revelation of these things. It is a visible display and demonstration of the power and prescience of God, and of the truth of his word. And although it forms but a part of a small portion of the Christian evidence, it lays not only a stone of stumbling, such as infidels would try to cast in a Christian's path, but it fixes at the very threshold of infidelity an insurmountable barrier, which all the ingenuity of sceptics cannot evade, and which all their power can never overthrow.

The anger of the Lord has not returned until he has executed, and till he has performed the thoughts of his heart; and in the latter days we may now consider it perfectly. Though he once caused to cleave unto him the whole house of Israel, and the whole house of Judah, as the girdle cleaveth to the loins of a man; yet when they despised his statutes, and walked contrary to him, and would not return from their own ways, he took away his peace, his loving kindnesses and mercies from them, and cast them out of his sight. But it was not till their neck became an iron sinew, that he put upon it an iron yoke.

"What seest thou?" was the question of the Lord

to the prophet, when he made to appear before him a sign of judgments that were to come upon the Jews. And the words were repeated at every sign. And now on a retrospect of their actual sufferings, prolonged for ages and not yet passed from view, and when all these have been to us a sign set before us that we may see it, it is the voice of the Lord that seems to put the question again—"What seest thou?" And who so blind as not to see that the Jews stand forth from among the nations of the earth as a token, a sign, a wonder, and a witness to all people, that the prophets spoke not a vision of their hearts, but out of the mouth of the Lord; and that the sufferings of the Jews have not been by chance, but by judgment? And when the Lord thus speaks unto thee, answer thou him. And who so dumb as not to make confession with the lips, that this is the Lord's doing, and wondrous in our eyes? and that, although the Jews would not observe his statutes to do them, nor fear the great and glorious name—THE LORD THY GOD—their wonderful plagues, and the plagues of their seed, have clearly shown that, above all, his statutes shall be obeyed, and his great and glorious name feared above every other fear.

Here the most ignorant may learn that God will by no means acquit the guilty. And even those who think not of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, as exemplified to the universe in the sufferings of the Son of God, by which sin was condemned in the flesh, may look and see how great is the indignation of a thrice holy God against it, as visibly exemplified in the judgments which he has executed upon the Jews. Their punishment, like their sin, is written with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond. "How readest thou?" If you cannot learn from thence, wherewithal can you

be instructed? Here the man whose idol is the world, may learn how dreadful is the curse that cleaves to covetousness. Here the boaster of privileges which he abuses may cease to pervert the right ways of the Lord, or to trust in unwarrantable hopes, when he thinks on the once chosen people of God looking for a Messiah while his blood was upon their heads. Here the pride of ancestry may be humbled, in beholding the seed of Abraham, whose lineage is traced to the creation, the offscourings of the earth and the revilings of all flesh. Here the profane swearer may learn whose great and glorious name it is that he takes in vain; and if his sin be not washed away by the blood of Christ, what his punishment shall be when the Lord will not hold him guiltless. Here the scoffer at the threatened judgments of God may learn from ten thousand facts, that his threatened judgments have proved true, and that none of them are ever to be mocked at and had even he the wisdom, the feeling, and the grace to consider perfectly the judgments which the Lord hath already executed in the earth upon a single people, not only would his ears tingle at the recital of such woes, but, looking from national to individual, from temporal to eternal punishments, from those which have fallen upon the Jews, to those which shall come on "all the workers of iniquity," his heart would quake, till the thought of his uttering another scoff at the religion of Jesus would be more fearful to his altered spirit than the thought of all the accumulated miseries which the Jews have ever suffered. And here, at the sight of such temporal judgments, even the Christian may not only learn the more to fear the great and glorious name of the Lord his God, but may also find new reasons to prize the blessings of redemp-

tion, and to flee, with renewed alacrity, from the wrath to come.

But national judgments, though heretofore most conspicuous in regard to the Jews, and though literally fulfilled respecting them, are not confined to them alone. And in the same true and holy word in which sentence was written against their iniquities wherever they were committed, it is recorded that the Lord, who hath now long left them to be a curse and a reproach throughout the world, hath a controversy with all nations, and will plead with all flesh, and hath appointed a year of recompenses for the controversy of Zion; a time to try all that are on the face of the earth. And we cannot call this truth to remembrance, and bear in mind, at the time, the wo denounced against the false prophets and teachers among the Jews, who by healing the wound of the people slightly, and by saying, Peace! peace! when there was no peace, caused them to err by their lies and by their lightness; nor can we close our view, dim and contracted as it has been, of the judicial sufferings of the Jews, without urging the reader to think, in all seriousness, how awfully these judgments warn all to stand in awe and sin not; how they set forth sin before us stripped of every disguise, that we may see it in all its abomination, as in the sight of God it appears; in all its hideousness, as the child of hell, and in all its danger, to every nation now, to every individual hereafter, as linked closely to judgment, except its own fetters shall be broken, and redemption, through the Savior, be timely found from its bondage. And where 's the people, though the name of Christian be upon them, to whom peace! peace! may be safely said? Or who can tell that the time is not come, when those shall prove the warmest lovers of their race who give

the loudest warnings of their danger? As the clay is in the hand of the potter, so is the house of Israel, and every other people, in the hand of the Lord. "At what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, or concerning a kingdom, saith the Lord, to pluck up, and to pull down, and to destroy it; if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; if it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them." Jer. 18:7-10.

We have seen the judgments on the house of Israel. O that they would return unto the Lord, for he would have mercy upon them. "Thus saith the Lord, If my covenant be not with day and night; and if I have not appointed the ordinances of heaven and earth; then will I cast away the seed of Jacob, and David my servant, so that I will not take any of his seed to be rulers over the seed of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; for I will cause their captivity to return, and have mercy on them." Jer. 33:25, 26.

CHAPTER V

Prophecies concerning Judea and the adjoining Countries

Judea, the country of the Jews, of which Jerusalem was the capital, and which was also called Canaan, Palestine, and the Holy Land, was so exceedingly fertile, that, according to Volney, an infidel writer, whose

evidence will be largely adduced to prove its desolation, it was ranked by the Greeks and Romans among the finest of their provinces. Celebrated ancient authors bear the most decided testimony to the great number of towns and villages with which it was over-spread, to the eminence of several of its cities, the excellency of the climate, and the fertility of the soil, whereby it outrivalled Italy in the abundance of its fruits, and to the very high degree of cultivation it had reached; from whence Syria, including Ammon, Moab, and Philistia, as well as Judea, was proverbially called a garden by the Greeks, who possessed a rich and beautiful country of their own. So highly was the beauty and fertility of Judea esteemed, many centuries after the prophecies had described its future and long-continued desolation.

The earth is the Lord's, and as it was cursed for the sake of man when he first sinned against God, the glorious land of Judea was likewise accursed, and "desolations of many generations" were to pass over it, on account of the sins of the people to whom the Lord had given it, and for whom it is still reserved, to be held by them in perpetuity, when they shall have returned unto the Lord God of their fathers.

The calamities of the Israelites were to rise progressively with their iniquities; and the desolation of their country, as well as their banishment from it, is ranked among the punishments that were denounced against them. And many prophecies respecting it, which admit of a literal interpretation, and which have been literally fulfilled, are abundantly clear and expressive.

- "I will make your cities waste, and bring your sanctuaries into desolation; and I will bring the land into

desolation; and your enemies which dwell therein shall be astonished at it; your land shall be desolate, and your cities waste. Then shall the land enjoy her Sabbaths. As long as it lieth desolate it shall rest." Levit. 26:31-35, 43.

The particular features of the desolation of Judea are minutely traced out in other prophecies, Isa. 1:7; 24:1-13; 32:9-15; 27:10. Jerem. 4:20, 26-28; 12:7-14. Ezek. 12:19, 20, exactly as they are described by modern travelers. The vision of the prophets was as clear as the eye-sight of any who now read the history of Judea, or look upon the land; while the many vestiges of ancient cultivation, ruins abounding every where, the remains of Roman buildings and high-ways, the natural richness of the soil, in many places yet unaltered, agree with the universal voice of history in attesting, beyond the possibility of a doubt, that for ages after the era of the prophets, Judea was altogether different from what it now is, or from what any mortal could have conceived that, for so long a period, it ever would have become.

The land was to be overthrown by strangers; mischief was to come upon mischief, and destruction upon destruction; the land was to be desolate; there were to be desolations of many generations. After a long and uninterrupted possession of Judea by the Israelites,—the Chaldeans, Syrians, Egyptians, and Romans were successive strangers who brought destruction upon destruction, and prepared the way for more savage desolators. The history of Judea for the last twelve hundred years is well recorded by Volney. "In the year 622, (636,) the Arabian tribes, collected under the banners of Mahomet, seized, or rather laid it waste. Since that period, torn to pieces by the civil

wars of the Fatimites and the Ommiades; wrested from the caliphs by their rebellious governors; taken from them by the Turkmen soldiery; invaded by the European crusaders; retaken by the Mamelukes of Egypt, and ravaged by Tamerlane and his Tartars, it has at length fallen into the hands of the Ottoman Turks." It has been trodden down of the Gentiles—overthrown by strangers—destruction has come upon destruction.

The cities were to be laid waste. By the concurring testimony of all travelers, Judea may now be called a field of ruins. These, though in general tenantless, retain the names of their ancient cities. Heaps of rubbish and of ruins are all that remain of Cesarea, Zabulon, Capernaum, Bethsaida, Gadara, Tarichea, and Chorazin. Desolators have brought to perfection their destined work on those cities where Christ and his apostles lived and preached. Columns covered with rubbish and shapeless heaps of ruins are scattered over the whole country. These are in some instances extensive. The remains of Arimathea show, according to Volney, that it must have been about five miles in circumference. The ruins of Djerash (Gerasa) are described by different travelers as finer than those of Palmyra. But of many towns, once illustrious in Palestine, scarcely a vestige remains—they are so utterly laid waste.

The land was to be brought into desolation—to rest, and enjoy her Sabbaths. And while the children of Israel were to be in their enemies' land, so long was their land to lie desolate. They have been for nearly eighteen centuries in their enemies' land, and their own land is still desolate. The sword was drawn after them, and the ploughshare has rested in Judea.

The most fertile plains lie untilled. The country is overrun by rebel tribes; the Arabs pasture their herds at freedom. "The art of cultivation," says Volney, "is in the most deplorable state, and the countryman must sow with the musket in his hand." Valleys naturally the most fertile are covered with varieties of thistles; some of the hills are scarcely accessible, so closely are they beset with thorns; the wild plants and grasses on the plains sometimes impede the traveler, and so luxuriant is their growth, that horses with difficulty pass through them; and the whole district of Tiberias, as Burckhardt, a celebrated traveler, relates, is covered with a thorny shrub. "The land mourns, and is laid waste, and has become as a desolate wilderness. Upon the land of my people shall come up thorns and briers."

"Your highways shall be desolate." Lev. 26 : 22. Isa. 33 : 8. The highways lie waste; the wayfaring man ceaseth. Judea was traversed with roads in every direction, and the intercourse was incessant between its numerous and populous cities. The remains of highways, no longer passable, are still to be seen. "In the interior parts of the country," says Volney, "there are neither great roads, nor canals, nor even bridges over the rivers and torrents, however necessary they may be in winter. The roads in the mountains are extremely bad. There are no inns any where; neither posts nor public conveyances; not a wagon nor a cart in all Syria." The same remarkable facts are stated by others. In a country where there is a total want of wheel-carriages of every description, the highways, however excellent and numerous they once might have been, must lie waste; and where dangers are encountered at every step in passing over wastes that are

overrun by plundering and lawless Arabs, the way-faring man ceaseth. But let the disciples of Volney tell how his ample description of these existing facts was summed up in a brief prophetic sentence by Moses and Isaiah; by the former thirty-three, and by the latter twenty-five centuries past.

The condition of the inhabitants of Judea, as well as of the land, when the house of the Lord would be forsaken, and his heritage left and given into the hands of her enemies, is described in repeated prophecies. Many pastors (or rulers) were to destroy his vineyard, to tread his portion under their feet, and to make his pleasant portion a desolate wilderness; the spoilers were to come, and the sword was to devour; no flesh was to have peace; they were to put themselves to pain, but they were not to profit, and they were to be ashamed of their revenues. Jerem. 12:7-13. It was prophesied that when the Israelites should be scattered among the nations and dispersed in the countries, the inhabitants of Jerusalem and of the land of Israel would eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment, that her land might be desolate from all that was therein, because of the violence of them that dwelt therein. Ezek. 12:19, 20. While the ancient possessors of the land were to be scattered abroad, it was to be defiled under the inhabitants thereof; they that dwelt therein were to be desolate, and few men left. Their joyless state is thus described: "The new wine mourneth, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. The mirth of tabrets ceaseth. The noise of them that rejoice endeth. The joy of the harp ceaseth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be little in them that drink it; all joy is darkened; the mirth of the land is gone." Isa.

24:7-11. And such, to an exact likeness, and in every respect, are those still who dwell in Judea, while the Lord has forsaken his heritage and left it in the hands of its enemies, and while his ancients are scattered abroad. And while many other witnesses are not wanting, Volney alone gives the most copious and distinct evidence of each of the facts. And if ever there was a perfectly unexceptionable and unsuspected witness, he, in this case, is the man. He is careful in stating the revenue of the different pachalics of Syria.

In Aleppo. . 800 purses.

Tripoli 750

Damascus. . . 45

Acre 750

Palestine . . —

2345 purses (£122,135 sterling.)

The revenue of Palestine (including Philistia and part of Judea) was gifted to two individuals. And together with that of Damascus, the least by far of all the rest, it formed almost the whole revenue of the Holy Land. "They shall be ashamed of your revenues." The government of the Turks in Syria is entirely a military despotism; that is, the bulk of the inhabitants are subject to the caprices of a faction of armed men, who dispose of every thing according to their interest and fancy. In each government the pasha is an absolute despot. In the villages the inhabitants, limited to the mere necessities of life, have no arts but those without which they cannot subsist. There is no safety without the town, nor security within their precincts. The barbarism of Syria is complete. They live in a state of perpetual alarm. Every peasant is afraid of exciting the envy of his equals, and the

avarice of the aga and his soldiers. In such a country, where the subject is perpetually watched by a despoiling government, he must assume a serious countenance for the same reason that he wears ragged clothes or in other words, "because of the violence of them that dwell therein." Such is the testimony of Volney "They that dwell therein are desolate. They eat their bread with carefulness, and drink their water with astonishment. They put themselves to pain, but it does not profit them; no flesh has peace. The land is defiled under the inhabitants thereof.

Few men left. "So feeble a population in so excellent a country may well excite our astonishment; but this will be increased, if we compare the present number of inhabitants with that of ancient times. We are informed by the philosophical geographer Strabo, that the territories of Yamnia and Yoppa, in Palestine alone, were formerly so populous as to bring forty thousand armed men into the field. At present they could scarcely furnish three thousand." "The stranger that shall come from a far land shall be astonished at it." In the preceding words Volney expresses his astonishment. "They have no music but vocal, for they neither know nor esteem instrumental; and they are in the right, for such instruments as they have, not excepting their flutes, are detestable." "The mirth of the harp ceaseth, the joy of the tabret ceaseth." "Their singing is accompanied with sighs and gestures. They may be said to excel most in the melancholy strain. To behold an Arab with his head inclined, his hand applied to his ear, his eye-brows knit, his eyes languishing; to hear his plaintive tones, his sighs and sobs, it is almost impossible to refrain from tears." Their very mirth is melancholy; their very sports

tend to sadness; "all the merry-hearted do sigh; their shouting is no shouting." "Their behavior is serious, austere, and melancholy. They rarely laugh. And the gayety of the French appears to them a fit of delirium. They have a serious, nay, even sad and melancholy countenance." "All joy is darkened, the mirth of the land is gone." Volney instances the Jews, to show that the character of the people is entirely changed from what it was in ancient times. "One of the chief sources," continues he, "of gayety with us, is the social intercourse of the table and the use of wine. The orientals (Syrians) are strangers to this double enjoyment. Good cheer would infallibly expose them to extortion, and wine to a corporal punishment, from the zeal of the police in enforcing the precepts of the Koran. It is with great reluctance the Mahometans tolerate the Christians in the use of a liquor they envy them." The wines of Jerusalem (though Judea was "a land of vines") are described by another traveler as "most execrable;" and by a third, as "probably the very worst to be met with in any country." "The new wine mourneth; the vine languisheth. They shall not drink wine with a song; strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it."

The exception to this general desolation is not the least remarkable and distinguishable feature of Judea, nor the least wonderful of the prophecies concerning it; and, like the last touch of the painter, it renders the picture complete. "When thus it shall be in the midst of the land, there shall be as the shaking of an olive tree, and as the gleanings of grapes when the vintage is done. The glory of Jacob shall wax thin: and it shall be as when the harvestman gathereth the corn and reapeth the ears with his arm; yet gleanings of grapes

shall be left in it, as the shaking of an olive tree, two or three berries in the top of the uppermost bough, four or five in the outmost fruitful branches thereof." Isa. 24 : 13 ; 17 : 4-6. These words imply, as is otherwise expressed without a metaphor, that a small remnant would be left ; that though Judea should become poor, like a field that has been reaped, or like a vine stripped of its fruits, its desolation would not be so complete but that some vestige of its former abundance, the gleanings of its ancient glory, would be still visible. It is even so. Whenever any spot is fixed on as the residence, or seized as the property of a Turkish aga, or of an Arab sheikh, little culture is needful, and protection only is required, that the exuberance and beauty of the land of Canaan may speedily re-appear. And the garden of Geddin, abounding with olives, almonds, peaches, apricots, and figs ; Napolose, the ancient Sychem, "luxuriantly embosomed in the most delightful and fragrant bowers, half concealed by rich gardens and by stately trees ;" the vale of Zabulon ; rich forests on the mountains of Gilead, though the plains beneath be covered only with thistles ; the valley of St. John, close by Jerusalem, crowned with olives and vines, and bearing the milder fig and almond below, appear in the midst of surrounding wastes as Edens in a desert ; and are just like gleanings after the full crop has been reaped, or the few berries that remain after the olive has been shaken. But who could have thought that the same cause was to produce so opposite effects ; or that a few berries on the outmost branches would be saved by the same hand that was to shake the olive ?

Of Samaria, the capital of the ten tribes of Israel, it was foretold, "I will make Samaria a heap of the field, and as plantings of a vineyard ; and I will pour down

the stones thereof into the valley; and I will discover the foundations thereof." Micah, 1: 6. Herod the Great enlarged and adorned Samaria. It was the see of a bishop during several centuries of the Christian era; and there are still many of its ancient medals and coins. These are the memorials of a city which has long ceased to exist. Its stones have been poured down into the valley. One of the earliest of modern travelers described it as wholly covered with gardens; and later accounts in like manner tell of "the hill where once stood Samaria," and that "its local features are seen in the threat of Micah."

Jerusalem was to be trodden down of the Gentiles till the times of the Gentiles should be fulfilled. Eighteen hundred years after this prediction was uttered by the Author of the Christian faith, we still can say, the times of the Gentiles are not yet fulfilled, and Jerusalem is to this day trodden down of the Gentiles. In early ages after their dispersion, the most furious attempts of the Jews to recover it proved altogether fruitless. The Roman power which had plucked them from off their own land, prevented them from taking root in it again. And when (under Julian, who thought that the emperor of Rome could contend with a word which had been uttered some centuries before, by one who was crucified) the Roman power was united to that of the Jews, without any opposing human means, to rebuild their city and temple, and to reinstate them in Judea, the attempt, as a heathen historian and other writers relate, was effectually frustrated, in spite of every effort of the Roman soldiery, by fearful balls of fire bursting from the ground and burning the workmen, till they ceased to contend with the fiery element. Certain it is, and this could be known to God alone,

that the Jews have never yet been reinstated in Judea, and that Jerusalem has ever since been trodden down of the Gentiles. Romans, Grecians, Persians, Saracens, Tartars, Mamelukes, Turks, and Egyptians, Arabs and Turks again, have, age after age, trodden it down. The Jews alone, to whom the very dust of it is dear, have never obtained possession of it. And the truth of this word alone, spoken by Jesus, whom their forefathers crucified, is an infinitely stronger proof that it is of God, than all that the author of any false religion ever uttered.

Such is now the wide-wasting desolation and misery which is spread over the cities and the land on which the blessing of God once rested more than on any other; and so many and clear are the marks that all the curses that were written have come upon it as well as upon the people, to whom, if they had not departed from the living God, it was given for a perpetual inheritance. Think then of the Jews dwelling in peace and safety, each man under his own vine and under his own fig-tree, and of the Jews scattered among all nations, and pining away in their iniquity in their enemies' land; think also on Judea, each spot a garden, and the little hills rejoicing on every side, and on Judea, a desolate wilderness, and all joy departed from it; and learn to know how great is the difference, perhaps unthought of and unfelt before, between the promises and the threatenings of the Lord, or between enjoying his favor and incurring his wrath. His promises and threatenings, not for time only, but for eternity, are now set before us all; and all have now to determine which they will choose. Do earthly objects which attract the eye ensnare also the heart, and withdraw us from the love and service of God, or blind the eyes of

our understandings that we walk not by faith, and look not to the word of God as it is written unto us? Then surely we may take a warning from Judea in its desolation. And if we consider it perfectly, we shall find how the Scriptures concerning it were given for our instruction in righteousness. We may at least learn from thence that it is not the cultivation of fields, nor the erection of cities, that should be the chief object of man; that these, however fruitful, rich, and fair, would be all blasted in a moment were the Lord to breathe upon them in his anger; that his favor is the only strong hold; and that to be rich toward God is the only true and imperishable treasure. And seeing that God, who in times past and in divers manners spake unto the people by the prophets, hath spoken unto us by his own Son, how earnestly ought those who have heard, and who may ever read or hear the words, the promises, and the threatenings of Christ and his apostles, always to watch and to pray that they fall not into temptation; that they forfeit not a better inheritance than was that of the possession of the land of Canaan; and that a worse desolation may never come over their spirits than has come, since it was smitten with a curse, upon the land of those to whom Moses and the prophets still speak in vain. And how diligently ought every believer in Jesus to labor in the high and holy vocation assigned him by his Master, and day by day to cultivate, through the abundant mercy of his God, every Christian grace and virtue, till, where the barren wild of nature once was, the vineyard of the Lord be clothed with all the fruits of the Spirit springing up unto immortality and glory, and till there be attained that moral, spiritual, and therefore higher beauty and nobler culture than the cold earth in its fairest forms

can show; which no wrath of man ever can deface, which no exterminating angel will ever lay desolate, but which renders the soul, when redeemed, rescued and separated from sin, meet to be a partaker of an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away. Of that glorious inheritance now set before the Christian, the land of promise, in the prospect of the Israelites as they passed through the desert, was but a faint emblem: and let the mercies of Jesus, by whose blood the heavenly Canaan was purchased, win your hearts to his love, till that love constrain you so to look to the word of God, and so to live, that the loss of that land by the Jews may never prove a faint emblem of the loss that would otherwise be your own; and that the place, "the kingdom within you," on which, for Jesus' sake, the blessing of God would now rest, and which he seeks that he may dwell there, may never be forsaken of him, and that you may never have a portion with hypocrites and unbelievers, who shall pine away in their iniquities, where there is weeping, and wailing, and gnashing of teeth, in utter desolation, not such as the eye can see, but such as the spirit would for ever feel.

But other countries lie desolate beside that of Judea, and many nations that were the enemies of the Jews have perished, while they, though not left unpunished, have not been cut off.

Of the prophecies respecting Ammon, Moab, and Philistia, a mere enumeration may here suffice. It was prophesied concerning the countries of Ammon, Moab, and Philistia, which are all naturally very fertile, and which abounded in wealth and population long after the Christian era—that Ammon was to be a spoil to the heathen, to be destroyed and to be a perpetual or

long-continued desolation; that its capital was to become a desolate heap, to be a stable for camels, and a couching-place for flocks; and that the Ammonites were to be cut off, to perish, and not to be remembered among the nations; that Moab was to flee away, all its cities to be desolate without any to dwell therein, and no city to escape; that those who dwelt in the cities would leave them and dwell in the rocks, and be like the dove that maketh her nest in the sides of the hole's mouth; and that the cities of Aroer would be for flocks to lie down, none making them afraid; that the valley was to perish, and the plain to be destroyed; that wanderers were to come upon Moab, and cause him to wander; that Moab would be a derision, and its daughters be at the ford of Arnon, as a wandering bird cast out of the nest; that the land also of the Philistines was to be destroyed—the sea-coasts to be dwellings for shepherds and folds for flocks; that the remnant would perish; that Gaza would be bereaved of its king, of its wealth, and of its fortifications; that the inhabitant would be cut off from Ashdod; that Ashkelon would be a desolation without an inhabitant, and that Ekron would be rooted up. Of Lebanon it was prophesied that its branches were to fall, its cedars to be devoured; and (although it was covered with trees for eight hundred years after the prophecy was delivered) that the trees of this forest were to be few, that a child might write them. And, in one word, it may be said that all these prophecies, however marvellous they may seem, are at this hour, as proved by the most unexceptionable and abundant evidence, literally fulfilled.

EDOM, or IDUMEA, forms the only other boundary of Judea, and the prophecies concerning it remain to be briefly considered. And here again we may appeal to

Volney, in the first instance, as the readiest witness. The prophecies are so remarkable that they shall be given somewhat at length.

“From generation to generation it (Idumea) shall lie waste, none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it, and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there; and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof; and it shall be a habitation for dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island; and the satyr (or hairy creature) shall cry to his fellow; the screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay and hatch, and gather under her shadow; there shall the vultures also be gathered every one with her mate. Seek ye out of the book of the Lord and read; no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded, and his Spirit it hath gathered them. And he shall cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it for ever—from generation to generation shall they dwell therein. Isa. 34: 5, 10–17. Concerning Edom, thus saith the Lord of hosts: Is wisdom no more in Teman? Is counsel perished from the prudent? I will bring the captivity of Esau upon him, the time that I will visit him. If grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleaning grapes? if thieves by night, they will destroy till they have enough. But I have made Esau bare, I have uncovered his secret.

places, and he shall not be able to hide himself. Behold they whose judgment was not to drink of the cup have assuredly drunken; and art thou he that shall go altogether unpunished? Thou shalt not go unpunished, but thou shalt surely drink of it. I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bozrah (the strong or fortified city) shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes. Lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men. Thy terrible-ness hath deceived thee and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, that holdest the height of the hill. Though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. Also Edom shall be a desolation; every one that goeth by shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbor cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it. Jer. 49 : 7-10, 12-18. Thus saith the Lord, I will stretch forth mine hand upon Edom, and will cut off man and beast from it, and I will make it desolate from Teman. Ezek. 25 : 13. The word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God, I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate.—Thus will I make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth. I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return. When the whole earth rejoiceth I will make thee desolate. Thou shalt be desolate, Mount Seir, and all Idumea, even all

of it. And they shall know that I am the Lord. Ezek. 35:1, &c. Joel, 3:19. Edom shall be a desolate wilderness. I have made thee small among the heathen, thou art greatly despised.—The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high.—Shall I not destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?—The house of Jacob shall possess their possessions, but there shall not be any remaining of the house of Esau. Obad. ver. 2, 3, 8, 17, 18. I laid the mountains of Esau and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places; thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down; and they shall call them the border of wickedness." Mal. 1:3, 4.

Is there any land, once inhabited and opulent, so utterly desolate? There is, and that land is Idumea. And all may now know that He who spoke such judgments concerning it, is the Lord. Idumea was situated to the south and south-east of Judea. It bordered on the east with Arabia Petræa, under which name it was included in the latter part of its history; and it extended southward to the eastern gulf of the Red Sea. A single extract from the travels of Volney will be found to be equally illustrative of the prophecy and of the fact.

"This country has not been visited by any traveler, but it well merits such an attention, for from the report of the Arabs of Bakir, and the inhabitants of Gaza, who frequently go to Maan and Karak, on the road of the pilgrims, there are to the south-east of the lake Asphaltites, (Dead Sea,) within three days' journey,

upward of thirty ruined towns absolutely deserted. The Arabs, in general, avoid them on account of the enormous scorpions with which they swarm. We cannot be surprised at these traces of ancient population, when we recollect that this was the country of the Nabatheans, the most powerful of the Arabs, and of the Idumeans, who, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem, were almost as numerous as the Jews. Besides the advantages of being under a tolerably good government, these districts enjoyed a considerable share of the commerce of Arabia and India, which increased their industry and population. We know that, as far back as the time of Solomon, the cities of Astioum Gaber (Esion Gaber) and Ailah (Eloth) were highly frequented marts. The Idumeans, from whom the Jews only took their ports at intervals, must have found in them a great source of wealth and population."*

Evidence which must have been undesigned, which cannot be suspected of partiality, and which no illustration can strengthen, and no ingenuity pervert, is thus borne to the truth of the most wonderful prophecies. That the Idumeans were a populous and powerful nation, at a time long after the delivery of the prophecies; that they possessed a tolerably good government, (even in the estimation of Volney;) that Idumea contained many cities; that these cities are now absolutely deserted, and that their ruins swarm with scorpions; that it was a commercial nation, and possessed highly frequented marts; that it forms a shorter rout than an ordinary one to India; and yet that it had not been visited by any traveler, are facts stated or proved by Volney.

* Volney's Travels, vol. 2, p. 344, &c.

Although long a thoroughfare for the commerce of the surrounding nations, and possessed of highly frequented marts, it is with great difficulty that the traveler in these regions can penetrate on any side within the boundaries of Idumea.—And now, instead of being resorted to from every quarter, none pass through it.

It is not the dread of the wide desert, into which it is now transformed, that alone occasions the extreme hazard of traversing it. The Arabs on its borders, and who migrate with their tents throughout Edom, and carry there their plunder from other regions, are a fierce and warlike race, notorious robbers, and at war even with the Arabs around them—and they threatened some travelers who reached their border with instant death if they attempted to pass through. And hence, while they used unconsciously the very words of one prophecy, their universal character, as well as their conduct, bears witness to another: "It shall be called the border of wickedness."

Burckhardt, a learned and very enterprising traveler, entered Edom, disguised as an Arab, and was stripped of some rags that covered his wounded ancles. Captains Irby and Mangles, and other English gentlemen, with several attendants, having obtained the protection of a most intrepid Arab chief, reached Petra, once the capital of Idumea, and after encountering the greatest difficulties and dangers, were soon forced to return. From the printed account of their travels, and those of Burckhardt, much interesting information has been derived respecting Edom.

The great difficulty of ascertaining the actual state of that country seems to be implied in the words of Scripture, in reference especially to the animals that were to possess it: "Seek ye out and find, not one of

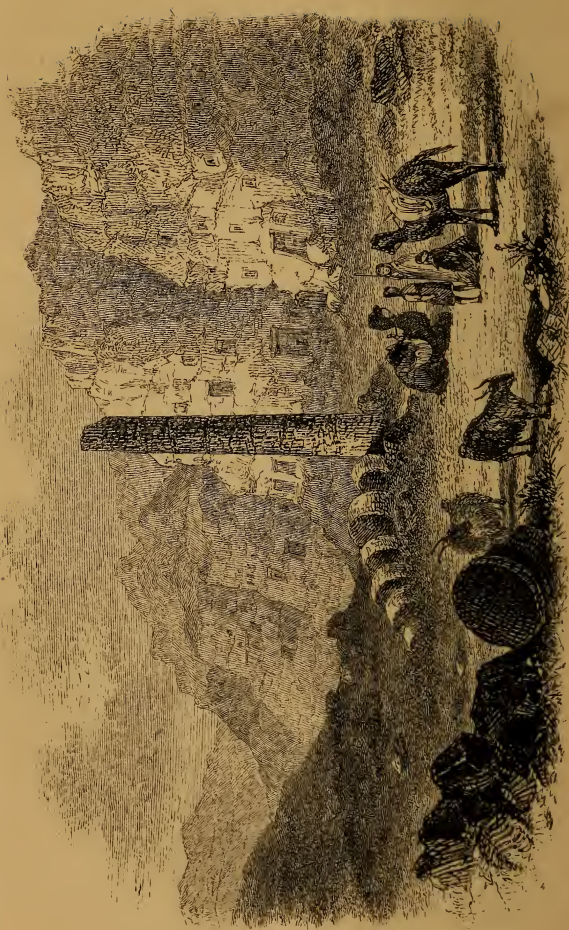
these shall fail." And while all the facts have not heretofore been ascertained, neither is the time of the final judgments on the land yet fully come. Judea, Ammon, Moab, and Philistia, according to the sure word of prophecy, are to be brought back from desolation, and to be possessed by the people of Israel. But when the controversy of Zion shall be passed, of Edom it is said, by the Lord, "When the whole earth rejoiceth I will make thee desolate."

Every new fact, descriptive of the state of Edom, is an echo of the prophecies; yet Burckhardt never once alluded to them; and as his sole object was to explore the country, they seem to have been wholly foreign to his view.

Of the eastern part of Edom he says, "All this country is a desert; and Maan (or Teman, as marked in the map prefixed to his travels,) is the only inhabited place in it." "I will make it desolate from Teman." In the interior of Idumea, "the whole plain presented to the view an expanse of shifting sands. The depth of sand precludes all vegetation of herbage."—"On ascending the western plain, we had before us an immense expanse of dreary country, entirely covered with black flints, with here and there some hilly chain rising from the plain." "If grape-gatherers come to thee, would they not leave some gleanings? but I have made Esau bare. I will make thee most desolate. I will stretch out upon Edom the line of confusion and the stones of emptiness."

"The traces of many towns and villages" are to be seen in Edom; but the sand is in some places so very deep, that there is not the slightest appearance of a road, or of any work of human art, though a Roman road passed directly through the country. Of the re-





VIEW OF THE ROCKS OF PETRA, THE CAPITAL OF EDMOM, OR IDUMEA. PAGE 89, 90.

O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks—I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. JER. 49: 16

mains of ancient cities still exposed to view, Burckhardt describes the ruins of a large town, of which nothing remains but broken walls and heaps of stones; the ruins of several villages in its vicinity; the ruins of an ancient city; and the extensive ruins of Gheran del Arindela, an ancient town of Palestina Tertia. He enumerates nine different ruined places in Djebel Shera, (Mount Seir,) and states, that of the towns laid down in D'Anville's map, Thoana excepted, no traces remain "I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate, O Mount Seir, I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return."

Yet the ruins of these cities are not the chief monuments of the ancient greatness of Edom. Its capital city, now without an inhabitant, except the wild animals to which it was allotted more than a thousand years before it ceased to be tenanted by men, presents one of the most wonderful and singular scenes that can possibly be conceived. "In the vicinity of Mount Seir, the extensive ruins of a large city,—heaps of hewn stones, foundations of buildings, fragments of columns, and vestiges of paved streets, are spread over a valley which is enclosed on each side by perpendicular cliffs, varying from four hundred to seven hundred feet in height, which are hollowed out into innumerable chambers of different dimensions, rising in the cliffs, tier above tier, till "it seems impossible to approach the uppermost." Columns also rise above columns, and adorn the fronts of the dwellings; horizontal grooves, for the conveyance of water, run along the face of the cliffs; "flights of steps" formed the means of ascent, and the summit of the heights, in various places, is covered with pyramids cut out of the rock. The identity of the scene, as described by the prophet,

in all the terribleness of the human power which then pertained to it, and as depicted in the desolate aspect it now exhibits, is such as cannot be mistaken. "Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thine heart, O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock that holdest the height of the hill; though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord; also Edom shall be a desolation."

The mausoleums and sepulchres are very numerous and magnificent. They are of various periods and orders of architecture. One of them, in particular, is described as a work of immense labor and colossal dimensions, in perfect preservation, containing a chamber sixteen paces square and above twenty-five feet high, with a row of columns in front thirty-five feet high, crowned with a pediment highly ornamented, &c. "all cut out of the rock." And great, it is justly said, must have been the opulence of a city which could dedicate such monuments to the memory of its rulers. But the time is come when "they shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, (or rather they shall call, or summon, the nobles thereof,) but there shall be no kingdom there, and all her princes shall be nothing."

The city was the see of a bishop for several centuries; and there are many edifices of the Roman and Grecian architecture, which proves that they were built long after the Christian era. "They shall build, but I will throw down."

"Thorns shall come in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof." In Idumea each Bedouin (or wandering Arab) carries in his girdle a pair of small pincers to extract the thorns from his feet. "I will make thee small among the nations, thou art great-

ly despised." So desolate a region as Edom is now become small among the nations. Instead of its ancient opulence and commerce, the picking of gum arabic from the thorny branches of the talk-trees is their poor occupation, and the only semblance of industry practised there by the Arabs. Instead of the superb structures of antiquity, they have only a few miserable huts; their tents are low and small; and some of them are destitute of any tents or shelter. The public authorities at Constantinople, when asked for a firman, or letter of protection to a traveler, to visit the ruins of Petra, denied all knowledge of such a place. How greatly is it despised!

"Shall I not destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau?" Sir Isaac Newton traces the origin of letters, astronomy and navigation to the Edomites. The book of Job is as splendid and lasting a proof of the eloquence that pertained to Edom, as magnificent palaces, hewn out of the cliffs, are indestructible memorials of their power. But so entirely has understanding departed out of the mount of Esau, that the wild wanderers who now traverse it, consider the remains of antiquity as the work of genii! To clear away a little rubbish, merely to allow the water to flow into an ancient cistern, in order to render it useful to themselves, "is an undertaking far beyond the views of the wandering Arabs." They cherish sentiments the most superstitious and absurd; and no Temanite can now discourse like Eliphaz of old. "Wisdom is no more in Teman, and understanding has perished out of the mount of Esau."

The cormorant, according to our translation, is mentioned the first in order of the animals that were to be

found in Edom; but the word in the original is *kat*; and there are instances in which it is written *kata*. Burckhardt, altogether unconscious of this, for he hazards a different supposition, relates that "the bird *katta* is met with in immense numbers. They fly in such large flocks that the Arab boys often kill two or three of them at a time, merely by throwing a stick among them." They possess it.

"The owl and the raven (or crow) shall dwell in it." Owls have now "their lonely habitation" in the clefts of the rock where many of the children of Esau dwelt. "The fields of Tafyle," situated in the immediate vicinity of Edom, "are frequented by an immense number of crows."—Edom is famed among the Arabs for its ravens.

"It shall be a habitation for dragons" (serpents) The statement by Volney, derived by information from the Arabs, of the enormous scorpions with which the ruins of its cities swarm, and the similar testimony borne by a learned traveler, Dr. Shaw, who states that it abounds with lizards and vipers, may suffice, in lieu of more direct proof, to show how the heritage of Esau is laid waste for the dragons of the wilderness.

"The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island." It is here worthy of remark, that the emperor Decius caused fierce lions and lionesses to be transported from Africa to the borders of Palestine and Arabia, or Edom, that, propagating there, they might act as an annoyance to the barbarous Saracens. And thus transported from a distant desert, animals pertaining to different regions might literally be said to meet there.

"The satyr shall dwell there." The satyr is a fabulous animal. And the word (*soir*) should have been

translated the goat, as different commentators have remarked, without any reference to, or knowledge of the fact, as relating to Edom, where, as has only recently been ascertained, "herds of mountain goats pasture in flocks of forty or fifty together."—They dwell there.

But the words of prophecy themselves command the strictest scrutiny into their truth, and the task yet remains "to seek out and find," in reference to the animals that were all to be gathered unto Edom, "that no one of these shall fail, and that none shall want her mate."*

"Thou shalt be desolate, O Mount Seir, and they shall know that I am the Lord." The dispersion of the Jews, and the desolation of Judea, do not more clearly accredit every word which the Lord has spoken against them, than each land of the ancient enemies of the Jews bears witness, in like manner, that the God of Israel, he is the Lord. The Edomites have been cut

* Two French travelers, one of them the distinguished naturalist M. Laborde, of the French Institute, have very recently visited Petra; and in a letter from thence, which has been transmitted to Europe, and partly published in some literary journals, they speak of a "range of gigantic columns, of which the effect is indescribable." "We have seen," they add, "the ruins of Balbeck, the long ranges of columns of Palmyra, the street and the oval of Djerash, but all these were far behind these immense piles of two or three stages of columns, this square league of rock, excavated and strewed with the most splendid ruins. We were in a continued ecstacy." The Kamel Pharaon, treasury of Pharaoh, "consisting of two stages of columns, interspersed with the richest ornaments, curious bas-reliefs, and great equestrian statues, presented the most extraordinary appearance that we had ever seen, and of which the finest drawing could give but a faint idea."

off for ever, and there is none remaining of the house of Esau. In their stead his word hath commanded, and his Spirit hath gathered wild animals by name, while the people of his curse have been extirpated from off the face of the earth. And Edom, notwithstanding the terribleness of its strength of old, and the magnificence of its desolated and deserted habitations now, lies stricken with a judgment that shall never be repealed. The word of the Lord against it has not returned unto him void; it never goes causelessly forth; and it ever unerringly fulfills the purpose for which he sent it. And since the Jews and their enemies have assuredly "drunken of the cup," is it either the hypocrite or the unbeliever, in a Christian land, that shall pass unpunished?

The enemies of the Gospel might take warning from the fate of the enemies of Israel, who have been cut off according to the word of the Lord, and whose very land, that especially of Esau, for his violence against his brother Jacob, has been scathed with a curse that shall cleave to it for ever. The Most High God will avenge the quarrel of his "everlasting covenant," as well as of that which was to be disannulled. And though the enemies of the Christian faith were to league together, as did the confederated tabernacles of Edom against Judah, all the terribleness of their strength, wherein they trusted, must finally become like the chaff before the wind, or the rolling thing before the whirlwind, and they themselves fall, like Edom, never to rise again. For who hath hardened himself against God and hath prospered? And if they will not read from the book of the Lord these words which were first penned on Edom, they may behold how they are now written over its "desolate wilder-

ness," and engraved on its "gigantic columns," as on a monument, and read them there, that their hearts may not be hardened any more, like granite or adamant, lest God should set a seal upon themselves, in answer to the question—a seal that would be fixed upon the soul, though the earth were removed out of its place.

A word may here be spoken even to the wise. Were any of the sons of men to be uninstructed in the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom, and in the knowledge of his word, which maketh wise unto salvation, and to be thus ignorant of the truths and precepts of the Gospel, which should all tell upon every deed done in the body ; what in such a case—if all their superior knowledge were unaccompanied by religious principles—would all mechanical and physical science eventually prove but the same, in kind, as the wisdom of the wise men of Edom ? And were they to perfect in astronomy, navigation, and mechanics, what, according to Sir Isaac Newton, the Edomites began, what would the moulding of matter to their will avail them as moral and accountable beings, if their own hearts were not conformed to the divine will ; and what would all their labor be at last, but strength spent for naught ? For were they to raise column above column, and again to hew a city out of the cliffs of the rock, let but such another word of that God, whom they seek not to know, go forth against it, and all their mechanical ingenuity and labor would just end in forming—that which Petra is, and which Rome itself is destined to be—"a cage of every unclean and hateful bird." The experiment has already been made ; it may well and wisely be trusted to, as much as those which mortals make ; and it is set before us, that, instead of provoking the Lord to far worse than its repetition in personal

judgments against ourselves, we may be warned by the spirit of prophecy, which is the testimony of Jesus, to hear and to obey the words of him—"even of Jesus, who delivereth from the wrath to come." For how much greater than any degradation to which hewn but unfeeling rocks can be reduced, is that of a soul, which, while in the body, might have been formed anew after the image of an all holy God, and made meet for beholding his face in glory—passing from spiritual darkness into a spiritual state, where all knowledge of earthly things shall cease to be power—where all the riches of this world shall cease to be gain—where the want of religious principles and of Christian virtues shall leave the soul naked, as the bare and empty dwellings in the clefts of the rocks—where the thoughts of worldly wisdom, to which it was inured before, shall haunt it still, and be more unworthy and hateful occupants of the immortal spirit than are the owls amid the palaces of Edom—and where all those sinful passions which rested on the things that were seen, shall be like unto the scorpions, that none can now scare away from among the wild vines, which are there entwined around the broken altars where false gods were worshipped.

But as none that exalt themselves against the Lord shall prosper, but shall all be brought down, though their nest were as high as the eagle; so none that wait upon the Lord, and put their trust in him, shall ever be dismayed, but shall renew their strength and mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint: whatever their occupation be, they forget not their high calling. The more closely they see into the works of nature, the more carefully do they consider the operations of the

hands of the great Architect of the universe. Whatever else they learn, they diligently search the Scriptures, and ever find them full of true wisdom. The whole word of God is unto them as a well of water springing up unto eternal life; and unto them, in a higher sense than to the Israelites of old, "there shall come water by the way of Edom." The literal prophecies concerning it, like all Scripture beside, will be profitable unto them for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. And that from thence they may, through the grace of God, be thus furnished, now that the judgments of God have fallen on Edom, it behoves all who are called by the name of the Lord, who would account themselves his adopted children through Christ Jesus, and all who would not wish to be, like the Edomites, "a people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever," to consider seriously whether their piety toward God, and the deeds which they are doing in the body, be such as render a right answer to the appeal which God made unto the priests as well as to the people of Israel, when he denounced his judgments against Edom. "If I be a Father, where is mine honor; and if I be a Master, where is my fear?"

CHAPTER VI

Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Egypt.

NINEVAH.

To a brief record of the creation, of the antediluvian world, and of the dispersion and different settlements

of mankind after the deluge, the Scriptures of the Old Testament add a history of the Hebrews for the space of fifteen hundred years, from the days of Abraham to the era of the last of the prophets. While the historical part of Scripture thus traces, from its origin, the history of the world, the prophecies give a prospective view, which reaches to its end. And it is remarkable that profane history, ceasing to be fabulous, becomes clear and authentic about the very period when sacred history terminates, and when the fulfillment of those prophecies commences which refer to other nations beside the Jews.

Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian empire, was, for many ages, a very extensive and populous city. Its walls are described by heathen historians as having been a hundred feet in height, sixty miles in compass, with fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet high. This "exceedingly great city" having repented at the preaching of Jonah, its destruction was averted for a time; but relapsing into iniquity, it was swept away, so that there are now but slight vestiges of it to be seen. The Assyrians grievously oppressed the Israelites, took Samaria, and carried the ten tribes into captivity. 2 Kings, 17 : 5, 6 ; 18 : 10-13, 34 ; Ezra, 4 : 2. They took also all the fenced cities of Judah, and exacted a heavy tribute from the Jews. But the glory and the power of Assyria, and of its capital city, are departed ; like that of the mighty host of Sennacherib its king, when smitten, in a night, by an angel of the Lord.

A Greek historian, who repeatedly alludes to an ancient prophecy concerning it as known to the Ninevites, in describing the manner of its destruction, relates, that the Assyrian army was suddenly assaulted by the

Medes in a time of festivity, when they had been supplied with much wine; and that, unable to resist the enemy, a great part of them were destroyed; that the river, having increased to an excessive and unexampled height by heavy and long-continued rains, broke down a great extent of the wall, opened an entrance for the enemy, and overflowed the lower part of the city; that the king in his desperation, and deeming the prediction accomplished, heaped an immense funeral pile, and having set fire to it and to the palace, was himself consumed together with his household and his wealth; and finally, that the Medes, having taken the city after a siege of three years, carried away many talents of silver and gold to Ecbatana. "While they are drunken as drunkards they shall be devoured as stubble fully dry. With an overflowing flood He will make an utter end of the place thereof. The gates of the rivers shall be opened. Nineveh is of old like a pool of water. The gates of thy land shall be set wide open unto thine enemies; the fire shall devour thy bars. Fortify thy strong holds—there shall the fire devour thee; take ye the spoil of silver, take the spoil of gold; for there is none end of the store and glory out of all the pleasant furniture." Nahum, 1 : 8, 10; 2 : 6, 8, 9; 3 : 13-15.

The utter destruction and perpetual desolation of Nineveh were foretold. "The Lord will make an utter end of the place thereof. Affliction shall not rise up the second time. The merchants of Nineveh, who were multiplied above the stars of heaven, and even her crowned, who were as locusts and great caterpillars, they flee away, and their place is not known where they were. He will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. Nahum, 1 : 8, 9; 3 : 16, 17; Zeph. 2 : 13-15. The very site of Nineveh was long un

known. It has of late been visited by different travelers. It is now an extended waste, interspersed but sparingly with heaps of rubbish. The "principal mounds" which are few in number, are in many places overgrown with grass, and resemble the mounds left by the intrenchments and fortifications of ancient Roman camps. The appearance of other mounds and ruins, "less marked" than even these, extend for ten miles, and "seem to be the wreck of former buildings."* There is not one monument of royalty, nor one token of splendor: the place is not known where they were. There are not even "bricks, stones, or other materials of building," discernible in the principal mounds. It is "a desolation—an utter ruin—empty, void, and waste." The very ruins have perished; and it is less than the wreck of what it was. It shows no signs of the greatness of its kings, nobles, or merchants: but even the want of these proclaims the truth of the word of God.

BABYLON.

Babylon rivalled Nineveh in its greatness and wickedness. And now the ruins of these once hostile cities, which vied with each other, and both of which oppressed and led captive, the one the Israelites, the other the Jews, show that each of them has borne its predicted "burden," and that the vision which the prophets of Israel saw respecting them is true. The accounts are now as ample, and the witnesses as numerous, of its present desolation, as of its ancient greatness.

Herodotus, Xenophon, Strabo, Pliny, Diodorus Siculus, and Quintus Curtius, who are all celebrated Greek or Roman writers, describe the ancient great-

* Buckingham's Travels in Mesopotamia, vol. 2, p. 49, 51, 62.

ness of Babylon. Their descriptions of it vary considerably, as referring to its state at different periods; but all concur in relating its wonderful magnificence, which is manifest to this day in the immense masses of its ruins. The testimony of Herodotus, the earliest of these writers, who lived about two hundred and fifty years after Isaiah, is particularly valuable, as he visited Babylon, and wrote from what he saw and examined on the spot. The walls of Babylon, before their height was reduced to seventy-five feet by Darius Hystaspes, were above three hundred feet high; they were eighty-seven feet broad, and forty-eight miles in compass. The temple of Belus, six hundred feet in height; the artificial hanging gardens, which, piled in successive terraces, towered as high as the walls; the embankments which restrained the Euphrates; the hundred brazen gates; the palace built by Nebuchadnezzar, surrounded by three walls eight miles in compass; and the adjoining artificial lake, the circumference of which was far more than a hundred miles, and its depth, by the lowest account, thirty-five feet; all displayed many of the mightiest works of mortals concentrated in a single spot. The great Babylon was the glory of kingdoms, and the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, the golden city, the lady of kingdoms, and the praise of the whole earth. The Scriptures, which thus describe it, mark minutely every stage of its fall till it should become what now it is—a complete desolation. And every feature of its present aspect is delineated in the prophecies with all the precision with which they could now be drawn by the traveler who looks on fallen Babylon itself.

Concerning the siege of Babylon, Herodotus and Xenophon relate, in exact concordance with what Isai-

ah and Jeremiah had foretold, that the Medes and Persians, united under Cyrus, (who was prophesied of by Isaiah, above a hundred years before he was born, as raised up by God to subdue nations before him, and to be his instrument in punishing his enemies and delivering his own people,) came up upon Babylon and besieged it;—that the Babylonians, inclosed within their impregnable walls, could not by any means be provoked to a combat in open field, but remained in their holds and forbore to fight;—that the device was adopted by Cyrus of turning the waters of the Euphrates, which flowed through the city, into the lake, whereby a snare was laid for Babylon;—that the waters of the river being thus dried up, so as to allow men to go over dry-shod, the enemy entered by its channel;—that, from the negligence of the guards, the gates leading from the river to the city were not shut;—that the Median and Persian army thus entering into the midst of the city by stratagem, and as if by stealth, designedly, during the night of an annual Babylonish festival, Babylon was taken when it was not aware;—that its princes, captains, and mighty men, when reposing after their feasts, and after they were drunken, were suddenly slaughtered, and slept the sleep of death;—and that Babylon, which had never been conquered before, was thus taken without resistance, in a moment, and in a manner which, till accomplished, was unknown to the king and to the inhabitants, who were not aware of their danger (the city being so very extensive) till one post ran to meet another, and one messenger to meet another, with the tidings that the enemy were within it, and that Babylon was taken Isa. 21:2; 45:1; 44:27. Jer. 50:38; 51:11, 27, 30, 36, 57.

The gradual decline of Babylon throughout succeeding ages is also traced in the prophecies. "Sit on the dust, there is no throne, O daughter of the Chaldeans." Isa. 47: 1. Babylon ceased to be the seat of government, and was reduced from an imperial to a tributary city. "All the graven images of her gods shall be broken unto the ground.—I will punish Bel (the temple of Belus) in Babylon, and I will bring forth out of his mouth that which he hath swallowed up." Jer. 51: 44, 47, 52. "Xerxes (a successor of Cyrus on the throne of Persia) seized the sacred treasures, and plundered or destroyed the temples and idols of Babylon."—"Take balm for her pain, if so be she may be healed. We would have healed Babylon, but she is not healed." Jer. 51: 8, 9.

Alexander the Great attempted to restore Babylon to its former glory, and designed to make it the metropolis of a universal empire. Ten thousand men were employed in repairing the embankments of the Euphrates and the temple of Belus. But the death of Alexander when in the prime of life, put an end to the work;—"she was not healed." "They shall remove, they shall depart, both man and beast." Jer. 50: 3. About a hundred and thirty years before the Christian era, a Parthian conqueror destroyed the fairest parts of Babylon; and many of the inhabitants, together with their effects, were removed into Media. The neighboring city of Seleucia also drained it of a great part of its population.

After the commencement of the Christian era, Babylon was only partially inhabited; and a wide space within the walls was cultivated. It diminished as Seleucia increased, and the latter, which was very populous, became the greater city. Babylon became gradu-

ally more and more desolate, till, in the fourth century, its walls formed an inclosure for wild beasts, and the place where the golden city had stood, which reigned over the nations, was converted into a field for the chase—a hunting place for the pastime of the Persian monarchs. The name of Babylon was cut off from the history of the world. And a long interval succeeded without any record concerning it. And the progress of ages has brought it at last to that utter desolation which the prophets testified that it would finally become.

The ruins of Babylon, the site or situation of which has been completely ascertained, have been visited and described, of late, by Mr. Rich, formerly British resident at Bagdad; Mr. Kinnier, author of the *Memoir of Persia*; Sir Robert Ker Porter, Captain Frederick, Mr. Buckingham, and Major Keppel. There is some diversity of opinion among these witnesses as to what particular palace or edifice of ancient Babylon is to be considered as now represented by a particular mound or heap; but the greatness of the desolation is visible to all, and admits neither of denial nor dispute. For, from being the “glory of kingdoms,” Babylon is now the greatest of ruins; and after the lapse of two thousand four hundred years, it exhibits to the view of every traveler the precise scene defined in prophecy; and it could not now be described in more appropriate and graphic terms than the following, though such words had never been known to be its “burden.”

“The name and remnant are cut off from Babylon. There the Arabian pitches not his tent; there the shepherds make not their folds; but wild beasts of the desert lie there, and their houses are full of doleful creatures, &c. It is a possession for the bittern, and a



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dwelling-place for dragons—a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert—a burnt mountain—empty—wholly desolate—pools of water—heaps—and utterly destroyed—a land where no man dwelleth—every one that goeth by it is astonished,” &c. Isa. 13:19, &c.; 14:22, &c. Jerem. 50:13, 23, 39, &c.; 51:13, 26, &c.

The superstitious dread of evil spirits, and the natural terror at the wild beasts which dwell among the ruins of Babylon, restrain the Arab from pitching his tent, or shepherds from making their folds there. The princely palaces and habitations of Babylon, utterly destroyed, are now nothing but unshapely heaps of brick and rubbish; along the sides, or on the summits of which, instead of the stately chambers which once they formed, are now caverns where porcupines creep, and owls and bats nestle; where “lions” find a den, and “jackals, hyænas, and other noxious animals, an unmolested retreat;” from which “issues a loathsome smell;” and “the entrances to which are strewn with bones of sheep and goats.” Though utterly destroyed, “their houses are full of doleful creatures, and owls dwell there and satyrs dance there. The wild beasts lie there and cry in their desolate houses; it shall be no more inhabited for ever,” &c. On the one side of the Euphrates, the canals being dry, and the crumbled bricks on an elevated surface exposed to the scorching sun, these “sun-burnt ruins” cover an “arid plain,” and Babylon is a wilderness, a dry land, and a desert. On the other, the embankments of the river, and with them the vestiges of ruins over a large space, have been swept away; the plain is in general “marshy, and in many places inaccessible,” especially after the annual overflowing of the Euphrates; “no son of man doth pass thereby; the sea, or river, is come upon

Babylon, she is covered with the multitude of the waves thereof." At that season also "large deposits of the waters," as Sir Robert Ker Porter, in his vivid description of the ruins of Babylon, remarks, "are left stagnant between the ruins;" again verifying the threat denounced against it,—I will make thee a possession for the bittern, and pools of water. The same author states, that "the abundance of the country is gone as clean away as if the besom of destruction had swept it from north to south. Isa. 14:23. And the "View of Babylon," inserted in his travels, is truly a picture of utter desolation, presenting its heaps to the eye, and showing how, as if literally buried under them,—"Babylon is brought down to the grave."

Fallen Babylon bears another mark of judgment, which has not been effected by the overflowings of the Euphrates, by the ravages of wild beasts, by the devastations of time, nor by the rapacity of man. There are, on the ruins of Birs Nimrod, or temple of Belus, which was standing after the beginning of the Christian era, large fragments of brick-work that have been "completely molten," and that ring like glass, which must not only have been subjected to a heat "equal to that of the strongest furnace," but which, being vitrified all around, "bear evident proof," as Mr. Buckingham remarks, "of the operation of fire having been continued on them, as well after they were broken down as before," and bear as evident proof that the ruin resembles, to use in justice the words of Major Keppel, "what the Scriptures prophesied it should become, a burnt mountain." Jer. 51:25. It is still worthy, from its mere immensity, of being a relic of Babylon the great, for, though a mass of ruins, it is still two

hundred and thirty-five feet high. "From the summit we had a distinct view," says Major Keppel, "of the heaps which constitute all that now remains of ancient Babylon; a more complete picture of desolation could not well be imagined. The eye wandered over a barren desert, in which the ruins were nearly the only indication that it had ever been inhabited. It was impossible to behold this scene and not to be reminded how exactly the predictions of Isaiah and Jeremiah have been fulfilled, even in the appearance Babylon was doomed to present: that she should never be inhabited; that the Arabian should not pitch his tent there; that she should become heaps; that her cities should be a desolation, a dry land, and a wilderness."

"The broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken." They were so broad that, as ancient historians relate, six chariots could be driven on them abreast. They existed for more than a thousand years after the prophecy was delivered. They were numbered among "the seven wonders of the world." And what can be more wonderful now, or what could have been more inconceivable by man when Babylon was in its strength and glory, than that the broad walls of Babylon should be so utterly broken that it can scarcely be determined with certainty that even a vestige of them remains? The trench out of which they were formed must now, in a great measure, be filled with them again; for both have alike disappeared. Captain Frederick could discover no appearance of the wall, after an active search of six days. One of the chapters, sixty pages in length, of Mr. Buckingham's Travels, is entitled "Search after the walls of Babylon." Major Keppel, after stating that he and those who accompanied him having, in common with other travelers, totally failed in discover-

ing any trace of the city walls, adds, that "the divine predictions against Babylon have been so literally fulfilled in the appearance of the ruins, that I am disposed to give the fullest signification to the words of Jeremiah,—the broad walls of Babylon shall be utterly broken." Jerem. 51:58.

"Who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord, and there is no God beside me? Has not the day of the Lord come against Babylon as a destruction from the Almighty?" And when we see the proudest works of man thus brought to the dust, where is the human strength, or wisdom, or beauty, or greatness, in which any ought to glory; and whose name alone is it that ought ever to be feared, and that shall be exalted for ever, but that of the Lord, who hath performed his every purpose against Babylon? And seeing that the glory of kingdoms is thus fallen, what earthly possession or privilege deserves to be prized like the citizenship of that kingdom which alone can never be moved? and how worthless in comparison shall they all at last prove, even as the dust of fallen Babylon! And what other stay need the true Christian seek, or what human fear need he dread, while he puts his trust in that God, according to whose word the broad walls of Babylon have been utterly broken? And if the life on their lips, and the breath in their nostrils, and the graves of their brethren and forefathers, cannot teach the worldly, the careless, and the nominal Christian, that pride was not made for man, let them go and look for the walls of Babylon, and stand on the blasted ruins of the temple of Belus. There they may learn, visibly illustrated, the truth of that word of God "All that is in the world, the lust of the eye and the pride of life, is not

of the Father, but of the world. And the world passeth away, and the fashion thereof." O that all such would remember, "He that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

TYRE.

Tyre, situated at the eastern extremity of the Mediterranean Sea, and to the north of Palestine, was for a long period the greatest commercial city in the world. Its opulence and extensive commerce are described by various heathen authors, and are eloquently delineated in the 26th, 27th, and 28th chapters of Ezekiel; in which the various characteristics of its then existing greatness are contrasted with the varied changes and humiliations it would undergo, till it should become a "place whereon fishers would dry their nets." We may here again refer to the testimony of Volney, who not only describes Tyre as having been "the theatre of an immense commerce and navigation—the nursery of arts and science, and the city of perhaps the most industrious and active people ever known;" but who also quotes, as "a valuable fragment of antiquity," Ezekiel's splendid description of its greatness and clear announcement of its future desolation; and expressly acknowledges that "the vicissitudes of time, or rather the barbarism of the Greeks of the lower empire, and the Mahometans, have accomplished this prediction." Volney's Travels, vol. 2, p. 210–212. The barbarism of the Mahometans, which finally completed the desolation of Tyre and the accomplishment of the prophecy, did not commence till twelve centuries after the "fragment of antiquity" which recorded its destiny was written. But no length nor "vicissitudes of

time" can conceal any event from the all-seeing eye of God.

The destruction of old Tyre (which was situated on the continent of Phœnicia) by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon; the dispersion of the inhabitants, and their flight by sea into other regions; the subsequent restoration (after the downfall of the Babylonian monarchy) of its commerce and wealth in that part of the city, or New Tyre, which was built on an island half a mile distant from the shore; the siege and destruction of this latter by Alexander the Great; the casting of the stones, and timber, and dust, (the ruins of the old or continental city,) into the midst of the water, yea, the scraping of her dust from off her, which were done by that conqueror, (as the historians of his life relate,) in forming a mound from the shore to the island, in carrying on the siege of the new city; the smiting of the power of this latter in the sea by her capture, and the annihilation of her commerce; the burning of the city; the slaughter of many of her inhabitants, and the selling of others into captivity, form the most prominent historical facts relative to Tyre, and are each the fulfillment of a prophecy. The destruction of the first city by Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans took place in the year 573 before Christ; the insular city began to flourish 70 years after, and its siege and capture took place 330 years before the birth of the Savior. The prophecies which predicted these two separate destructions of Tyre appertain to both, some expressions being applicable to the former, and some only to the latter; but all have been strikingly accomplished.

Ammon is yet a stable for camels; the cities of Aroer, in Moab, are for flocks to lie down; the desolate habitations of Edom remain; Nineveh is grassy mounds;

Babylon is heaps; but from off Tyre on the continent the very dust was scraped. It has been sought for, but has not been found. After the ruins of old Tyre had been cast into the midst of the water—materials having failed in consequence of the demolition of the first mound—the earth or soil was gathered up, as a Roman historian, Quintus Curtius, relates, and the dust of old Tyre covered a passage for the enemy through the sea unto the new. The mound still exists.

Such, however, was the celebrity of Tyre, and its adaptation for commerce, that it was soon rebuilt on the island, and long continued to flourish. An elegant temple and many churches were built there after the Christian era. Her merchandise and her hire, according to the prophecy, were holiness to the Lord. But the Christian churches in the East degenerated like those in the West—idolatry prevailed, transgressions came to the full. The Saracens, and afterward the Turks, (the first and the second “wo,”) overspread many a fertile region; and Tyre, though it continued a commercial city of importance till within the period of the last six hundred years, had become in the last century what, from the beginning, prophecy had declared it eventually would be—like the top of a rock—“a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea.” Ezek. 26 : 5. “The whole village of Tyre,” says Volney, “contains only fifty or sixty poor families, who live obscurely on the produce of their little ground and a trifling fishery.” “The port of Tyre,” as seen and described by Dr. Shaw, “small as it is, is choked up to that degree with sand and rubbish, that the boats of those fishermen who now and then visit this once renowned emporium, and dry their nets upon its rocks and ruins, can with great difficulty only be

admitted." Bruce describes the site of Tyre as a "rock whereon fishers dry their nets." The "mart of nations," is a fishing village; the walls of Tyrus and her towers are broken down; and fishermen spread their nets where "the princes of the sea" dwelt in their pleasant houses, and in the place from whence "the kings of the earth were enriched with the multitude of its riches and merchandise."

Tyrus sends not forth any merchandise to the nations now; but it sends forth a voice that may well reach further than all its traffic ever did, and be more profitable, as it has been more enduring, than all its fine linen, embroidered work, benches of ivory, precious clothes, ebony, emeralds, purple, agate, spices, fruits, wines, and all the multitude of its wares. Ezek. 27. And while all the ends of the earth may give audience unto that voice which cometh from the Lord, it may especially be heard by those who have succeeded to the commerce of the Tyrians, lest, being lifted up and corrupted as these people, their punishment should be the same. And now, when the noise of their songs has ceased, and the sound of their harps is no more heard; and when the princes of the sea have come down from their thrones; their predicted fate, which has been fulfilled, imparts to all who would err like them, a solemn warning to cultivate another and a better wisdom (such as once was taught by the fishermen of Galilee) than that "great wisdom and traffic" by which they increased their riches, and their heart was lifted up, but which could not save them from "the day of their ruin."

And all the mariners and pilots, and all that handle the oar, and the occupiers of merchandise, may hear the word of the Lord addressed unto all such, while

yet Tyrus was a merchant of the people of many isles. Their portion was to cry bitterly, to cast dust upon their heads, and to take up a lamentation for Tyre. For iniquity was found in it; it had sinned. Provoke not then the Lord to jealousy; are ye stronger than he? Provoke not the Lord to anger, nor think that ye could abide his wrath. Profane not his name. For it is written in words as plain as those of any judgment that has already been fulfilled, and in the same book—nay, it was written upon a table of stone by the finger of God, which they never were—"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." According to the word of the Lord—the stones, the timber, and the dust of old Tyre were cast into the midst of the waters; the dust was scraped from off it—and the "mart of nations" became a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea. Imprecate not, therefore, any curse upon others or yourself, for you may here see that God, who ever hears you, is able to give effect unto the swearer's prayer, to return his profane and blaspheming words into his bosom, and to make his cursing come upon him. The long-suffering patience of God will not always strive with ungodly men. Yet what else restrains him from rendering unto them the condemnation for which they so often cry aloud with their lips and with their lives? Surely the goodness of God, in withholding from them what they ask, and what they merit, should lead them to repentance, and to fear the great and glorious name—THE LORD THY GOD. In reading and remembering the words of Christ and his apostles, be never unmindful of these, Swear not at all—above all things, swear not. Let faith in him be the pole-star of your voyage through life;

let his word, for it is the will of God concerning you, be the chart by which you ever steer; and whatever shallows or rocks may encompass your course, on none will you then make shipwreck of faith and a good conscience, but will reach at last the haven of eternal rest. Fear God, and you need have no other fear. There is a fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness, where guilt may be purged away, even though it were of Tyrian dye; and where the heart, sprinkled from an evil conscience, may be purified for the habitation of a holy God. There is "a mart" which Jesus too has opened up, where even those who once covered themselves with cursing as with a garment, may for ever lay aside their besetting sin, and exchange it for those white robes of righteousness in which the children of a Redeemer's kingdom are clad. There is an ornament, even that of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price, and which ought to be far more highly prized than all "the chests of rich apparel" of which the proudest Tyrian could have ever boasted. There is a "merchandise" in which there is true wisdom and lasting gain, and in which you should never cease from trafficking till you be enabled certainly to find and securely to keep "the pearl of great price." And since you may wash and be clean, while you think on the sufferings of the Son of God for the sins of men, think also on the gifts he bestows upon men, and be not slack to barter the pleasures of sin for a season, for treasures in heaven that shall never fade. The wicked shall be cast into outer darkness, as old Tyre was cast, where still it lies in the midst of the waters; but the eternal inheritance of the righteous—where no billows can come over them

any more—shall be gladness and glory in the midst of the paradise of God.

EGYPT.

Egypt was one of the most ancient and one of the mightiest of kingdoms. The imperishable pyramids, and the ruins of its cities and temples, together with the splendid “tombs of the kings,” several of which have of late been opened by Belzoni, are now the chief, and nearly the only indications of its ancient glory. The abundance and magnificence of these surpass description, as the number of its cities and towns in ancient times, stated by Herodotus at twenty thousand, exceeds belief. That eminent author, who is styled the father of history, describes Egypt as being, both by nature and art, the most fruitful of all lands, and as containing more wonders than all other regions. Egypt is still full of wonders, though its ancient cities and temples are now in ruins. These have been largely described by Norden, Denon, Hamilton, Burckhardt, Belzoni, and others. Those stupendous temples, abounding with massy and lofty columns, are profusely covered with hieroglyphics, and though they were erected by mortals who had changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things, seem destined to pay homage to the one living and true God, the God of Israel, by illustrating the historical as well as prophetic truth of his word.

Egypt was the theme of many prophecies which were fulfilled in ancient times, as Bishop Newton has shown in his *Dissertations on the Prophecies*; and it bears to this day, as it has borne throughout many

ages, the marks with which prophecy had stamped its destiny. Ezek. 29 : 14, 15; 30 : 7, 12, 13; 32 : 15.

Egypt could truly boast of a long race of kings; and had continued, without interruption, a mighty kingdom from the earliest ages of the world. Its history, in this as in other respects, has, since the era of the prophets, been wholly reversed. But, however contrary to all human probability, and to all former experience, they plainly foretold that reversal.

Invaded and subdued by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, according to the word of the Lord, both by Jeremiah, 46 : 13, and by Ezekiel, 30 : 10, subjected afterward by the Persians under Cambyses, and to the Macedonians by Alexander the Great, Isa. 19 : 1-13, Egypt was, after his death, governed for nearly three centuries by the Ptolemies, the descendants of one of his generals, at which time it was an opulent kingdom, till, about thirty years before the Christian era, it came under the Roman yoke; and Saracens, Mamelukes, and Turks have since successively ruled over it. Its history shows the completion of the prophecies concerning it.

God had declared by Ezekiel, 29 : 14, 15; 30 : 12, 13, "They shall be a base kingdom. It shall be the basest of kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more among the nations. The pride of her power shall come down. I will sell the land into the hand of the wicked; and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers. I the Lord have spoken it. There shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt. The sceptre of Egypt shall depart away."

"Such," says Volney, "is the state of Egypt. Deprived twenty-three centuries ago of her natural proprietors, she has seen her fertile fields successively a

prey to the Persians, the Macedonians, the Romans, the Greeks, the Arabs, the Georgians, and, at length, the the race of Tartars, distinguished by the name of Ottoman Turks. The Mamelukes, purchased as slaves, and introduced as soldiers, soon usurped the power and elected a leader. If their first establishment was a singular event, their continuance is not less extraordinary. They are replaced by slaves brought from their original country. The system of oppression is methodical. Every thing the traveler sees or hears reminds him he is in the country of slavery and tyranny. In Egypt there is no middle class, neither nobility, clergy, merchants, nor landholders. Ignorance, diffused through every class, extends its effects to every species of moral and physical knowledge," &c. Volney's Travels, vol. i. p. 74, 103, 110, 190, &c. "A more unjust and absurd constitution," says Gibbon, "cannot be devised than that which condemns the natives of a country to perpetual servitude under the arbitrary dominion of strangers and slaves. Yet such has been the state of Egypt above 500 years. The most illustrious sultans of the Baharite and Borghite dynasties were themselves promoted from the Tartar and Circassian bands; and the four-and-twenty beys, or military chiefs, have ever been succeeded, not by their sons, but by their servants." Hist. of Decl. of Rom. Empire, vol. vi. p. 109, 110.

On a review of the prophecies relative to Nineveh, Babylon, Tyre, Egypt, Judea, and all the adjoining territories, is it not a fact which can admit of no dispute, and which needs no argument to support it, but which rests on the testimony of unbelievers no less than of Christians, that the fate of all these cities and

countries, in reference to their past history and present state, demonstrates the truth of the prophecies concerning them, and that all these prophecies, ratified by the events, give the most decisive proof that those holy men of old, who all testified of Jesus, spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost? No word can be more sure, in regard to past and present things, than theirs was in regard to the future. The desolations were the work of man, and were all effected by the enemies of Christianity; and it is the prediction of these literal facts, in all their particulars and minuteness, infinitely surpassing human foresight, which is the word of God alone. The ruin of empires, while it proves the truth of every tittle of these predictions, is thus a miraculous confirmation and proof of the inspiration of the Scriptures. By what fatality is it then, and how much does it show the weakness of their cause, that infidels should have chosen for the display of their power this very field, where, without conjuring, as they have done, a lying spirit from the ruins, they might have read the fulfillment of the prophecies on every spot? Every fact related by Volney is a witness against all his speculations—and out of his own mouth is he condemned. Can any purposed deception be greater or more glaring than to overlook these prophecies, and to attempt to raise an argument against the truth of Christianity from those very facts which, attesting their fulfillment, thereby so clearly establish it? Or can any evidence of divine inspiration be more convincing and clear than to view, in conjunction, all these marvellous predictions and their perfect completion?

CHAPTER VII.

The Arabs, &c.

The long-continued slavery of the Africans, the descendants of Canaan, of whom it was said, "A servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren," and the establishment of European colonies in Asia, or the enlarging of Japheth, whose descendants peopled Europe; and their dwelling in the tents of Shem, whose dwellings were unto the east, or Asia, Gen. 10 : 5, 6, 18, 19, 30, confirm to this day the truth of those words which were spoken by Noah—"Cursed be Canaan; a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. Blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant. God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." Gen. 9 : 25-27.

Of Ishmael, from whom the ARABS claim their descent, it was said by the angel of the Lord, before his birth, "He shall be a wild man; his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand shall be against him; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren. I will make him fruitful, and multiply him exceedingly; and I will make him a great nation." And unto his mother Hagar it was said, "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude." Gen. 16 : 10, 12; 17 : 20. The descendants of Ishmael have been multiplied exceedingly. His seed cannot be numbered for multitude. The history of the Arabs needs not to be detailed: they are universally known to be a wild people; their hand is against every man, and every man's hand is against them. In the

words of Gibbon the historian, which strikingly assimilate with those of the prophecy, they are "armed against mankind;" and the distinct marks of prophetic truth which the Arabs yet exhibit, cannot be better represented than in the words of an intelligent and observant eye-witness, who thus describes them after having visited an Arab camp, and examined the peculiarities of their race: "On the smallest computation, such must have been the manners of these people for more than three thousand years. Thus in all things verifying the prediction given of Ishmael at his birth, that he, in his posterity, should be a wild man, and always continue to be so, though they shall dwell for ever in the presence of their brethren.* And that an acute and active people, surrounded for ages by polished and luxurious nations, should, from their earliest to their latest times, be still found a wild people dwelling in the presence of all their brethren, (as we may call these nations,) unsubdued and unchangeable, is indeed a standing miracle—one of those mysterious facts which establish the truth of prophecy." Sir Rob. Ker Porter's Travels, vol. i. p. 304.

Recent discoveries have also brought to light the miraculous preservation and existence as a distinct people, of a less numerous but not less interesting race—"a plant which grew up under the mighty cedar of Israel, but was destined to flourish when that proud tree was levelled to the earth." "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, Jonadab the son of Rechab shall not want a man to stand before me for ever." Jer. 35 : 19. The Beni Rechab (sons of Rechab) still exist, a "dis-

* The Jews, the Edomites, the Moabites, Amalekites, and Ammonites, were literally their brethren, being, like them, descendants of Abraham, and all neighboring nations.

tinct and easily distinguishable people." They boast of their descent from Rechab, profess pure Judaism, and all know Hebrew. Yet they live in the neighborhood of Mecca, the chief seat of Mahometanism, and their number is stated to be sixty thousand. The account given of them by Benjamin of Tudela, in the twelfth century, (Basnage's Hist. p. 620,) has very recently been confirmed by Mr. Wolff; and as he witnessed, and heard from an intrepid "Rechabite cavalier," there is not wanting a man to stand up as a son of Rechab

CHAPTER VIII.

The Seven Churches of Asia.

Brief and incomplete as has been the summary view, given in the foregoing pages of the Evidence of Prophecy, yet do not the joint clearness of the prophecies themselves, and the profusion of precise facts which show their literal fulfillment, bid defiance to the most subtle sceptic to forge or feign the shadow of a just reason to prove how they could all have been spoken, except by inspiration of God? The sure word of prophecy has indeed unfolded many a desolation which has come upon the earth; but while it thus reveals the operation, in some of its bearings, of the "mystery of iniquity," it forms itself a part of the "mystery of godliness;" and it is no less the testimony of Jesus, because it shows, as far as earthly ruins can reveal, the progress and the issue of the dominion of "other lords" over the hearts of the children of men. The sins of men have caused, and the cruelty of men has effected, the dire desolations which the word of God foretold. Signs and tokens of

his judgments there indeed have been, yet they are never to be found but where iniquity first prevailed. And though all other warnings were to fail, the sight of his past judgments, and the sounding of those that are to come, might teach the unrepenting and unconverted sinner to give heed to the threatenings of his word, and to the terrors of the Lord, and to try his ways and turn unto God, while space for repentance may be found, ere, as death leaves him, judgment shall find him. And may not the desolations which God has wrought upon the earth, and that accredit his word, wherein life and immortality are brought to light, teach the man whose God is the world, to cease to account it worthy of his worship and of his love, and to abjure that "covetousness, which is idolatry," till the idol of mammon, in the temple within, shall fall, as fell the image of Dagon before the ark of the Lord in which "the testimony" was kept?

But naming, as millions do, the name of Christ, without departing from iniquity, there is another warning voice that may come more closely to them all. And it is not only from the desolate regions where heathens dwelt, which show how holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; but also from the ruins of some of the cities where churches were formed by apostles, and where the religion of Jesus once existed in its purity, that all may learn to know that God is no respecter of persons, and that he will by no means clear the guilty. "He that hath an ear let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

What church could rightfully claim or ever seek higher title than that which is given in Scripture to the seven churches of Asia, the angels of which were the seven stars in the right hand of Him who is the first

and the last—of Him that liveth and was dead, and is alive for evermore, and that hath the keys of hell and of death; and which themselves were the seven golden candlesticks in the midst of which HE walked? And who that hath an ear to hear, may not humbly hear and greatly profit by what the Spirit said unto them? Rev. 2 and 3.

THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS, after a commendation of their first works, to which they were commanded to return, were accused of having left their first love, and threatened with the removal of their candlestick out of its place, except they should repent, ch. 2:5. Ephesus is situated nearly fifty miles south of Smyrna. It was the metropolis of Lydia, and a great and opulent city, and (according to Strabo) the greatest emporium of Asia Minor. It was chiefly famous for the temple of Diana, "whom all Asia worshipped," which was adorned with 127 columns of Parian marble, each of a single shaft, and sixty feet high, and which formed one of the seven wonders of the world. The remains of its magnificent theatre, in which it is said that twenty thousand people could easily have been seated, are yet to be seen. Acts, 19:29. But "a few heaps of stones, and some miserable mud cottages, occasionally tenanted by Turks, without one Christian residing there,* are all the remains of ancient Ephesus." It is, as described by different travelers, a solemn and most forlorn spot. The Epistle to the Ephesians is read throughout the world; but there is none in Ephesus to read it now. They left their first love, they returned not to their first works. Their candlestick has been removed out of its place, and the great city of Ephesus is no more.

THE CHURCH OF SMYRNA was approved of as "rich,"

* Arundle's visit to the seven Churches of Asia, page 27.

and no judgment was denounced against it. They were warned of a tribulation of ten days, (the ten years' persecution by Diocletian,) and were enjoined to be faithful unto death, and they would receive a crown of life. Ch. 2:8-11. And, unlike to the fate of the more famous city of Ephesus, Smyrna is still a large city, containing nearly one hundred thousand inhabitants, with several Greek churches; and an English and other Christian ministers have resided in it. The light has indeed become dim, but the candlestick has not been wholly removed out of its place.

THE CHURCH OF PERGAMOS is commended for holding fast the name of the Lord, and not denying his faith, during a time of persecution, and in the midst of a wicked city. But there were some in it who held doctrines and did deeds which the Lord hated. Against them he was to fight with the sword of his mouth; and all were called to repent. But it is not said, as of Ephesus, that their candlestick would be removed out of its place. Ch. 2:12-16. Pergamos is situated to the north of Smyrna, at a distance of nearly sixty-four miles, and "was formerly the metropolis of Hellespontic Mysia." It still contains at least fifteen thousand inhabitants, of whom fifteen hundred are Greeks, and two hundred Armenians, each of whom have a church."

In the CHURCH OF THYATIRA, like that of Pergamos, some tares were soon mingled with the wheat. He who hath eyes like unto a flame of fire discerneth both. Yet, happily for the souls of the people, more than for the safety of the city, the general character of that church, as it then existed, is thus described: "I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first." Ch. 2:19. But against those, for such there

were among them, who had committed fornication, and eaten things sacrificed unto idols, to whom the Lord gave space to repent of their fornication, and they repented not, great tribulation was denounced; and to every one of them was to be given according to their works. These, thus warned while on earth in vain, have long since passed, where all are daily hastening, to the place where no repentance can be found, and no work be done. "But unto the rest in Thyatira (as many as have not known the depths of satan) I will put upon you, saith the Lord, none other burden." Ver. 24. There were those in Thyatira who could save a city. It still exists, while greater cities have fallen. Mr. Hartley, who visited it in 1826, describes it as "embosomed in cypresses and poplars. The Greeks are said to occupy three hundred houses, and the Armenians thirty. Each of them have a church."

The CHURCH OF SARDIS differed from those of Pergamos and Thyatira. They had not denied the faith, but the Lord had a few things against them, for there were some evil doers among them, and on those, if they repented not, judgment was to rest. But in Sardis, great though the city was, and founded though the church had been by an apostle, there were only a few names which had not defiled their garments. And to that church the Spirit said, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." But the Lord is long-suffering, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. And the church of Sardis was thus warned—"Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die; for I have not found thy works perfect before God. Remember, therefore, how thou hast received

and heard, and hold fast and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." Ch. 3:2, 3.

The state of Sardis now, is a token that the warning was given in vain; and shows that the threatenings of the Lord, when disregarded, become certain judgments. Sardis, the capital of Lydia, was a great and renowned city, where the wealth of Cræsus its king was accumulated, and became even a proverb. But now a few wretched mud huts, "scattered among the ruins," are the only dwellings in Sardis, and form the lonely home of Turkish herdsmen, who are its only inhabitants. As the seat of a Christian church, it has lost—all it had to lose—the name. "No Christians reside on the spot."

"And to the angel of the CHURCH IN PHILADELPHIA write, These things saith He that is holy, He that is true, He that hath the key of David, He that openeth and no man shutteth, and shutteth and no man openeth:—I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.—Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world." Ch. 3:9, 10. The promises of the Lord are as sure as his threatenings. Philadelphia alone long withstood the power of the Turks, and, in the words of Gibbon, "at length capitulated with the proudest of the Ottomans. Among the Greek colonies and churches of Asia," he adds, "Philadelphia is still erect: a column in a scene of ruins" Chap. 64. "It is indeed an interesting circumstance," says Mr. Hartley, "to

find Christianity more flourishing here than in many other parts of the Turkish empire: there is still a numerous Christian population; they occupy 300 houses Divine service is performed every Sunday in five churches." Nor is it less interesting in these eventful times, and notwithstanding the general degeneracy of the Greek church, to learn that the present bishop of Philadelphia accounts "the Bible the only foundation of all religious belief;" and that he admits that 'abuses have entered into the church, which former ages might endure, but the present must put them down.'—It may well be added, as stated by Mr. Hartley, "The circumstance that Philadelphia is now called Allah-Shehr, the city of God, when viewed in connection with the promises made to that church, and especially with that of writing the name of the city of God upon its faithful members, is, to say the least, a singular concurrence." From the prevailing iniquities of men many a sign has been given how terrible are the judgments of God. But from the fidelity of the church in Philadelphia of old, in keeping his word, a name and memorial of his faithfulness has been left on earth, while the higher glories, promised to those that overcame, shall be ratified in heaven; and toward them, but not them only, shall the glorified Redeemer confirm the truth of his blessed words, "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God;" even as assuredly as Philadelphia, when all else fell around it, "stood erect," our enemies themselves being judges, "a column in a scene of ruins."

"And unto the angel of the CHURCH of the LAODICEANS write,—These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold

nor hot. I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see." Rev. 3: 14, &c. All the other churches were found worthy of some commendation, and there was some blessing in them all. The church of Ephesus had labored and not fainted, though she had forsaken her first love; and the threatened punishment, except she repented, was the removal of her candlestick out of its place. A faithless and wicked few polluted the churches of Pergamos and Thyatira by their doctrines or by their lives; but the body was sound, and the churches had a portion in Christ. Even in Sardis, though it was dead, there was life in a few who had not defiled their garments; "and they shall walk with me in white, said the Lord, for they are worthy."

But in what the Spirit said to the church in Laodicea, there was not one word of approval; it was lukewarm without exception, and therefore it was wholly loathed. The religion of Jesus had become to them as an ordinary matter. They would attend to it just as they did to other things which they loved as well. The sacrifice of the Son of God upon the cross was nothing thought of more than a common gift by man. They were not constrained by the love of Christ more than by other feelings. They could repeat the words

of the first great commandment of the law, and of the second, that is like unto it; but they showed no sign that the one or the other was truly a law to them. There was no Dorcas among them, who, out of pure Christian love, made clothes for the poor. There was no Philemon, to whom it could be said, "The church in thy house," and who could look on a servant as "a brother beloved." There was no servant who looked to the eye of his Father in heaven more than to that of his master on earth, and to the recompense of eternal reward more than to the hireling wages of a day: and who, by showing all good fidelity, sought to adorn the doctrine of God his Savior in all things. There was nothing done, as every thing should be, heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men. The power of the world to come, and of that which now is, hung, as it were, even balanced in their minds; each had its separate influence and weight, even to a scruple; and they were kept distinct, as if there should never be any interference between them, or as if they were to hang in separate scales.

This was given unto the world, and that unto God, as if these Christian men had been full of the faith, that the revealed will of the Most High had no title to a supreme ascendancy over them, that all "the deeds done in the body would never be brought into judgment, and that lukewarmness was requital enough for redeeming love. Their only dread seemed to be lest they should be righteous overmuch. And for fear of that, which would have been inconsistent with their character, though not with their profession, they disregarded the words of one who was wiser than Solomon, and who had laid down his life for their sakes: they did not strive to enter in at the strait gate; to be

perfect was no purpose of theirs; there was no fight in their faith, no running in their race, no wrestling in their warfare, no victory in their work. Yet they could show a goodly form or frame-work of religion, on which they had raised many a high hope.

They trusted to redemption through Christ, while they were not redeemed from sin, nor actuated by the love of God. They used the means of grace, but neglected the end for which that grace had appeared. They were rich, they thought, and increased with goods, and had need of nothing. But they wanted zeal; and all they had was nothing worth. Whatever they vainly imagined themselves to be, the Spirit knew them truly, and told them what they were, even wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. They had done no evil, they thought, but they did little good. And they neither felt nor lived as if they knew that whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Their lukewarmness was worse, for it rendered their state more hopeless than if they had been cold. For sooner would a man in Sardis have felt that the chill of death was upon him, and have cried out for life, and called to the physician, than would a man of Laodicea, who could calmly count his even pulse, and think his life secure, while death was preying on his vitals. The character of lukewarm Christians, a self-contradicting name, is the same in every age. Such was the church of the Laodiceans. But what is that city now, or how is it changed from what it was?

Laodicea was the metropolis of the Greater Phrygia; and, as heathen writers attest, it was an extensive and very celebrated city. Instead of then verging to its decline, it arose to its greatest eminence only about the beginning of the Christian era. "It was the mother-

church of sixteen bishoprics." Its three theatres, and the immense circus, which was capable of containing upward of thirty thousand spectators, the spacious remains of which (with other ruins buried under ruins) are yet to be seen, give proof of the greatness of its ancient wealth and population, and indicate too strongly that, in that city where Christians were rebuked, without exception, for their lukewarmness, there were multitudes who were lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God. The amphitheatre was built after the Apocalypse was written, and the warning of the Spirit had been given to the church of the Laodiceans to be zealous and repent; but whatever they there may have heard or beheld, their hearts would neither have been quickened to a renewed zeal for the service and glory of God, nor turned to a deeper sorrow for sin, and to a repentance not to be repented of. But the fate of Laodicea, though opposite, has been no less marked than that of Philadelphia. There are no sights of grandeur, nor scenes of temptation around it now. Its own tragedy may be briefly told. It was lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot; and therefore it was loathsome in the sight of God. It was loved, and rebuked, and chastened in vain. And it has been blotted from the world. It is now as desolate as its inhabitants were destitute of the fear and love of God; and as the church of the Laodiceans was devoid of true faith in the Savior, and zeal in his service. It is, as described in his Travels by Dr. Smith, "utterly desolated, and without any inhabitant, except wolves, and jackals, and foxes." It can boast of no human inhabitant, except occasionally when wandering Turkomans pitch their tents in its spacious amphitheatre. The "finest sculptured fragments" are to be seen at a considerable

depth, in excavations which have been made among the ruins. Arundel's Travels, p. 85. And Col. Leake observes, "There are few ancient cities more likely than Laodicea to preserve many curious remains of antiquity beneath the surface of the soil; its opulence, and the earthquakes to which it was subject, rendering it probable that valuable works of art were often there buried beneath the ruins of the public and private edifices." A fearful significancy is thus given to the terrific denunciation, "Because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spew thee out of my mouth."

"He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches." The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. Each church, and each individual therein, was weighed in the balance of the sanctuary, according to their works. Each was approved of according to its character, or rebuked and warned according to its deeds. Was the church itself pure, the diseased members alone were to be cut off. Was the church itself dead, yet the few names in which there were life, were all written before God, and not one of those who overcame would be blotted out of the book of life. All the seven churches were severally exhorted by the Spirit according to their need. The faith delivered to the saints was preached unto them all; and all, as Christian churches, possessed the means of salvation. The Son of man walked in the midst of them, beholding those who were, and those who were not his.

By the preaching of the Gospel, and by the written word, every man in each of the churches was warned, and every man was taught in all wisdom, that every man might be presented perfect in Christ Jesus. And in what the Spirit said unto each and all of the churches,

which he that hath ears to hear was commanded to hear, the promise of everlasting blessedness, under a variety of the most glorious representations, was given, without exception, restriction, or reservation, to him that overcometh. The language of love, as well as of remonstrance and rebuke, was urged even on the lukewarm Laodiceans. And if any Christian fell, it was from his own resistance and quenching of the Spirit; from his choosing other lords than Jesus to have dominion over him; from his lukewarmness, deadness, and virtual denial of the faith; and from his own wilful rejection of freely offered and dearly purchased grace, sufficient, if sought, and cherished, and zealously used, to have enabled him to overcome and triumph in that warfare against spiritual wickedness to which Christ hath called his disciples; and in which, as the finisher of their faith, he is able to make the Christian more than conqueror.

But if such, as the Spirit described them and knew them to be, were the churches, and Christians then, what are the churches and what are Christians now? Or rather, we would ask of the reader, what is your own hope toward God, and what the work of your faith? If, while Christianity was in its prime, and when its divine truths had scarcely ceased to reach the ears of believers from the lips of apostles, on whose heads the Spirit had visibly descended, and cloven tongues, like as of fire, had sat; if, even at that time, one of the seven churches of Asia had already departed from its first love; if two others were partially polluted by the errors in doctrine, and evils in the practice, of some of their members; if another had only a few names that were worthy, and yet another none; and if they, who formed the last and worst of

these, thought themselves rich and increased with goods, and that they had need of nothing; and knew not that, being lukewarm, they were wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked; have you an ear to hear or a heart to understand such knowledge? and do you, professing yourself a Christian, as they also did, see no cause or warning here to question and examine yourself, even as the same Spirit would search and try you, of your works, and charity, and service, and faith, and patience?

What is your labor of love, or wherein do you labor at all for his name's sake, by whose name you are called? What trials does your faith patiently endure, what temptations does it triumphantly overcome? Is Christ in you the hope of glory, and is your heart purified through that blessed hope? To a church, we trust, you belong; but whose is the kingdom within you? What principles ever actuate you which Christ and his apostles taught? Where, in your affections and life, are the fruits of the Spirit—love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness, temperance? Turn the precepts of the Gospel into questions, and ask thus what the Spirit would say unto you, as he said unto the churches.

What the Spirit said unto primitive and apostolic churches, over which "the beloved disciple" personally presided, may suffice to prove that none who have left their first love, if ever they have truly felt the love of Jesus—that none who are guilty of seducing others into sin and uncleanness—that none who have a name that they live, and are dead—and that none who are lukewarm, are worthy members of any Christian communion; and that, while such they continue, no Christian communion can be profitable to them. But unto

them is "space to repent" given. And to them the word and Spirit speak in entreaties, encouragements, exhortations, and warnings; that they may turn from their sins to the Savior, and that they may live and not die. But were there one name in Sodom, or a few in Sardis, that are the Lord's, he knows and names them every one; and precious in his sight is the death of his saints. Some, on the other hand, may be sunk into the depths of satan, though in outward fellowship with a church, were such to be found, as pure as once was that of Thyatira. Whatever, therefore, the profession of your faith may be, seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness; that kingdom which is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost, and that righteousness which is through faith in Christ, who gave himself for the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it. And whatever dangers may then encompass you around, fear not—only believe; all things are possible to him that believeth.

It was by keeping the word of the Lord, and not denying his faith, by hearing what the Spirit said, that the church of Philadelphia held fast what they had, and no man took their crown, though situated directly between the church of Laodicea, which was lukewarm, and Sardis, which was dead. And dead as Sardis was, the Lord had a few names in it which had not defiled their garments—Christians, worthy of the name, who lived, as you yourself should ever live, in the faith of the Lord Jesus—dead unto sin, and alive unto righteousness; while all around them, though naming the name of Jesus, were dead in trespasses and sins. Try your faith by its fruits; judge yourself that you be not judged; examine yourself whether you be in the faith; prove your own self; and with the whole counsel of

God, as revealed in the Gospel, open to your view, let the rule of your self-scrutiny be what the Spirit said unto the churches.

Many prophecies remain which are not here noticed. But were any gainsayers to ask for more obvious facts and some demonstration of the truth of prophecy, which your own ears might hear and your eyes see, you have only to hear how they speak evil of the things that they understand not—how they speak great swelling words of vanity to allure others, promising them liberty while they themselves are the children of corruption; you have only to look on these scoffers, and mockers, and false teachers, who have come in the last times; who walk after their own lusts, who despise government, who are presumptuous and self-willed, and who foam out their own shame, to hear and to see the loud and living witnesses of the truth of God's holy and unerring word. 2 Pet. 3 : 3; Jude, 13. Such have been, and such are, the enemies of the Christian faith. Yet it calls them from darkness to light, and from death to life. Turn ye, turn ye: why, it asks of these boasters of reason, why will ye die?

If you have seen any wonderful things out of the law of the Lord, and have looked, though from afar off, on the judgments of God that have come upon the earth, lay not aside the thought of these things when you lay down this little book. Treat them not as if they were an idle tale, or as if you yourself were not to be a witness—and more than a witness—of a far greater judgment which shall be brought nigh unto you, and shall be your own.

If, in traversing some of the plainest paths of the field of prophecy, you have been led by a way which you knew not of before, let that path lead you to the

well of living waters, which springeth up into everlasting life to every one that thirsts after it and drinks. Let the words of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ be to you this wellspring of the Christian life. Let the word of God enlighten your eyes, and it will also rejoice your heart. Search the Scriptures, in them there are no lying divinations ; they testify of Jesus, and in them you will find eternal life. Pray for the teaching and the aid of that Spirit by whose inspiration they were given. And above all Christian virtues, that may bear witness of your faith, put on charity, love to God and love to man, the warp and woof of the Christian's new vesture without a seam ; even that charity, or love, by which faith worketh ; which is the fruit of the Spirit, the end of the commandment, the fulfilling of the law, the bond of perfectness, and a better gift and a more excellent way than speaking with tongues, or interpreting, or prophesying ; and without which you would be as nothing, though you understood all mystery and all knowledge. From the want of this the earth has been covered with ruins. Let it be yours, and however poor may be your earthly portion, it will be infinitely more profitable to you than all the kingdoms of the world, and all their glory. Prophecies shall fail ; tongues shall cease ; knowledge shall vanish away ; the earth and the works that are therein shall be burned up ; but charity never faileth.

If you have kept the word of the Lord, and have not denied his name, hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. But if heretofore you have been lukewarm, and destitute of Christian faith, and zeal, and hope, and love, it would be vain to leave you with any mortal admonition ; hear what the Spirit saith, and harden not your heart against the heavenly

counsel, and the glorious encouragement given unto you by that Jesus of whom all the prophets bear witness, and unto whom all things are now committed by the Father. "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous, therefore, and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

CHAPTER IX.

Daniel's Prophecy of the things noted in the Scripture of Truth.

There is a connected series of predictions, emphatically denominated "the Things noted in the Scripture of Truth," which forms a commentary upon some of the more obscure prophecies—which gives a condensed but precise account of the history of many kings—which marks the propagation, the persecution, the establishment, and the corruptions of Christianity—and which, while it commences with the reign of Cyrus, who delivered the Jews from their first captivity, de-

scribes, with the utmost precision, the rise, extent, and fall of that power which was to possess Judea in the latter times, previous to their final restoration. The prophecy is both local and chronological. It is descriptive of the government of the same identical region, and of the chief facts which relate to it, for many successive ages, and also of the spiritual tyranny which reigned for so long a period over Christendom. The events follow in succession, in the exact order of the prediction. They are not shadowed under types or figures, but foretold, in general, with the plainness of a narrative, and with the precision of facts. And Daniel relates them, not as delivered by him to others, but as declared, in a vision, to himself by an angel.

To enumerate all the particulars would be to transcribe all the words of the prophecy; but they afford too conclusive an evidence to be passed over in silence. The observations of Sir Isaac Newton on this prophecy contain a circumstantial detail of the historical events, and of their application to the prediction. The prophecy includes the whole of the eleventh chapter of Daniel. A view of the first three verses only will here be given :

“And now I will show thee the truth. Behold there shall stand up three kings in Persia (Cambyzes, and Darius Hystaspes,) and the fourth (Xerxes) shall be far richer than they all; and by his strength, through his riches, he shall stir up all against the realm of Grecia. And a mighty king (Alexander the Great) shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do according to his will. And when he shall stand up, his kingdom shall be broken, and shall be divided toward the four winds of heaven: and not to his posterity, nor according to his dominion which he ruled: for his king-

dom shall be plucked up, even for others beside those."

Soon after the death of Alexander the Great, his kingdom was divided toward the four winds of heaven, but not to his posterity; four of his captains, Ptolemy, Antigonus, Lysimachus, and Cassander, reigned over Egypt, Syria, Thrace, and Greece. The kingdoms of Egypt and of Syria became afterward the most powerful: they subsisted as independent monarchies for a longer period than the other two; and as they were more immediately connected with the land of Judea, which was often reduced to their dominion, they form the subject of the succeeding predictions. Bishop Newton gives even a more copious illustration of the historical facts which verify the whole of this prophecy than that which had previously been given by his illustrious predecessor of the same name, who has rendered that name immortal. He quotes or refers to authorities in every instance: and his dissertation on that part of the prophecy which relates to the kingdoms of Syria and Egypt is wound up in these emphatic words: "It may be proper to stop here, and reflect a little how particular and circumstantial this prophecy is concerning the kingdoms of Egypt and Syria, from the death of Alexander to the time of Antiochus Epiphanes. There is not so complete and regular a series of their kings, there is not so concise and comprehensive an account of their affairs to be found in any author of these times. The prophecy is really more perfect than any history. No one historian has related so many circumstances, and in such exact order of time, as the prophet has foretold them; so that it was necessary to have recourse to several authors, Greek and Roman, Jewish and Christian; and to collect here something from one, and there something from another, for bet-

ter explaining and illustrating the great variety of particulars contained in this prophecy." So close is the coincidence between the prophetic and the real history of the kings of Egypt and of Syria, that Porphyry, one of the earliest opponents of Christianity, labored to prove its extreme accuracy, and alledged from thence that the events must have preceded the prediction. The same argument is equally necessary at the present hour to disprove the subsequent parts of the same prophecy—though none can urge it now.

Every succeeding fact, from the time of Cyrus to the present age, gives as sure a confirmation as the voice of an angel could have done, that the things noted in his prophecy are those of the Scripture of truth. History interprets every part of it. It brings a multiplicity of witnesses, if we will listen to their testimony, from a long succession of ages, each arising to testify to its truth. And although the names of the countries be not mentioned, and the prophecy has received a variety of interpretations, yet we apprehend that it presents us, like every spot on earth which was the subject of scriptural prophecies, with ocular demonstration that there is a God who ruleth among the nations; and that the Christian religion, the purest and the best on earth, has that God for its author.

CONCLUSION.

The whole of the preceding brief and imperfect sketch forms little else than an enumeration of some of the more striking prophecies, and of facts which demonstrate their fulfillment and a recapitulation of all

the particulars would be an unnecessary repetition. The numerous obscure prophecies which contain much and striking evidence have been omitted, that the charge of ambiguity, too generally and indiscriminately attached to them all, might be proved to be unfounded. But having seen, in hundreds of instances, that prophecies which were plainly delivered have been as clearly fulfilled, comprehending them all in a single argument, and leaving the decision to the enemies of Christianity, or to those who are weak in the faith, and appealing to their reason without bespeaking their favor, may it not, in the first instance, be asked if it be an easy task which is assigned them, to disprove even this part of the POSITIVE EVIDENCE to the truth of the religion of Jesus? If they have ever staggered at the promises or threatenings of the Scriptures because of unbelief—discrediting all *revelation* from on high—can they not here discern supernatural evidence in confirmation of supernatural truths? May not *sight* lead them to *faith*? Must they not concede that the Christian has some reason for the hope that is in him? And may they not, at the very least, be led from thence to the calm and unprejudiced investigation, not only of the other prophecies, but of all the evidence which Christianity presents?

It may in reason be asked, if there be not something repugnant to the principles of Christianity in the mind of that man who will not hear Moses and the prophets, and who is slow of heart to believe all that they have spoken, though they afforded the means of detection in every prediction which they uttered, if their prophecies had been false—though they appealed to a vast variety of events which distant ages would bring into existence—though history has answered, and ocular

demonstration has confirmed this appeal, our enemies themselves being witnesses—and although there *never was* any other truth that could be tried by such a test? Might he not be convinced of a doctrine less moral, or not quite according to godliness, by evidence less miraculous? Is there no reason to fear that the light of evidence, though sufficient to dispel the cloud upon the understanding, is yet unable to penetrate “the veil upon the heart?” Scepticism, at best, is not a subject for boasting. It is easy to exclude the noontide light by closing the eyes; and it is easy to resist the clearest truth by hardening the heart against it. And while, on the other hand, there are minds (and Newton’s was among the number) which are differently affected by the evidence of prophecy, and which cannot be callous when touched by the concentrated rays of such light from heaven, whence can this great dissimilarity of sentiment arise from the same identical and abundant proof? And into what else *can* the want of conviction be resolved than into the scriptural solution of the difficulty—an evil heart of unbelief? “They will not come unto the light, because the light would make them free.”

But while the unbeliever rejects the means of conviction, and rests his hope on the assumed possibility that his tenets may be true—the positive evidence of Christianity convinces the unprejudiced inquirer, or rational and sincere believer, that it is impossible that his faith can be false. And when he searches out of the book of the Lord, and finds that none of them do fail, he looks on every accomplished prediction, even though it be the effect of the wrath of man, as a witness of God—he knows in whom he believes—he sees the rise and fall of earthly potentates and the convul-

sions of kingdoms, testifying of HIM who ruleth among the nations, and accrediting his word—he experiences the conviction that the most delightful of all truth, the hope which perisheth not, is confirmed by the strongest of all testimony, that heaven itself hath ratified the peace which it hath proclaimed—he rests assured that prophecy came not of old time by the will of man, but that holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost—and although he knows not the mode of the operations of the Spirit, he sees the demonstration of his power. And “taking heed thus unto the sure word of prophecy, until the day dawn and the day-star arise in his heart,” the true believer learns, from the things that are past, the certainty of the things that are to come hereafter—he rests not satisfied with a mere name that he liveth, while yet he might be dead, but having obtained that “precious faith,” the germ of immortality, which springeth up into eternal life, he experiences the power of the world to come, and unites the practice with the profession of religion—he copies the *zeal* of those who spend their strength for that which is in vain, and their labor for that which profiteth not, but he directs it to the attainment of an incorruptible inheritance—for he knows that his labor shall not be in vain while he yields obedience to that Word which is the charter of his salvation, and which so unequivocally bears the seal and superscription of the King of kings.





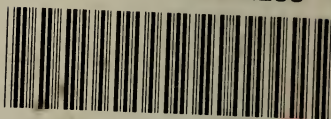
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